

## Change fate by being aggressively kind

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by [sircantus](#)

## Summary

“You do understand that you’re caring for the thing meant to bring destruction and chaos to our world, right?” The woman asks, Phil looking behind him fondly as Techno grabs at the ends of his wings.

“He’s just a child.” Phil answers distractedly, humming as his wings get gently yanked at.

“He’s the first of three to destroy life as we know it! Shouldn’t we, well, get rid of him?!”

“Oh, no.” Phil raises his eyes with a sharp glare. “Believe me, I have my own way of preventing the apocalypse.”

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Or, Techno, Wilbur, and Tommy are basically chaotic forces of nature, destined from birth to end the world and bring destruction. Most who hear of the tale of them are trying their best to track them down, and to end the monsters while they’re still young, still just children.

Phil has a different plan.

(In which Phil raises the minecraft equivalents of the anti-christ with love and support, so much so to the point where the world ending is really just a funny thought, and Phil has three kids who casually have powers that are bit more extreme than anything else in the world)

## Notes

I had an idea where Phil is like, living his life out in the Minecraft world, just chilling, and he still gets his chaotic kids, but he acquires them through the fact that everyone else is like “these children are so goddamn destructive”

Then I was like, “What if Phil basically just stops armageddon by being a Dad” and here we are.

Enjoy :)

- Translation into Español available: [Cambia el destino siendo agresivamente amable](#) by [ScapeSystem](#)

## Whispers go around

Phil hears it first when he's at the side of a road, in the middle of a cold forest, a few kind strangers sitting around him, all of them choosing to stay together for the night. Mindless, bloodthirsty monsters are rare in these lands, but they all have enough experience to be wary of the dark.

They're talking around a small fire, Phil drinking warm tea from a cup that warms his palms as the others chat about their lives, their experiences, and their sights. He's seen plenty, maybe more than most, really, but it's always nice to hear of other's tales.

He would speak of his own adventures, he would, only he's not in the mood for the strange look in people's eyes when they glance to his wings, gaze dragging over the necklace around his neck that has a faint red glow. People always ask the same questions, and after a while, Phil just gets tired of it.

At the very least, he's not the only one who's otherworldly, for there's a woman sitting across him with the horns of a ram growing out of her head, and her ears are nowhere like a human's.

She's not as quiet as Phil, and she seemed to have gotten past the usual curiosity of others rather quickly, chatting happily with the others around her, her ears flicking as she laughs along with the other's stories.

Phil sips at his drink with a bored face, his attention going to a couple sitting beside him, their hushed voices getting more sharp as one of them seems to bring something up. He listens in, looking off into the fire as they argue.

"You can't be serious. Surely not?" The man sitting beside Phil asks, leaning in close to his partner, eyes wide. "That's got to be bullshit!"

“It’s not! We can check at the next village we come across, I swear, the priest will say the same thing-”

“You tell me this *now* !?”

Phil raises his eyebrows as the two men bicker, getting so fired up to the point that the group around them tries to get them to calm. One of the men waves around a paper frantically, and Phil can’t quite see what’s on it, only red scribbles from what he can catch.

It gets to the point of shouting and pushing, and at that point, Phil takes it upon himself to stand up, his wings shifting out a bit as he puts his cup to the side on the ground.

“Woah, woah, mate, calm down.” Phil says, and everyone goes hushed when he gets to his feet. It’s not unusual, Phil’s always had that vibe. It could be the wings, he thinks, people seeing them and associating Phil with being powerful in some sort of way. It could be the way he’s not human, too, where sometimes his nails are just a little too sharp, and his eyes are a bit too bright, and it gets to a point where other travelers can’t hold eye contact with him, because he simply doesn’t pass for a ‘safe’ monster anymore.

Sometimes it’s annoying. Sometimes it works in his favor.

Either way, the couple looks away when Phil walks over to them, standing over them as they sit back down onto the ground. One of them still has that paper in his hands, crumpled in his grip. Phil feels curiosity burn in his chest, and he knows he’s going to get something out of this, one way or another.

“What are you both yelling over? Surely you can work it out?” Phil grins, trying to keep a friendly voice, to lower the tension running in the air. The two strangers glance at each other, then to Phil, who gives a worried look to them both.

He barely knows them at all, only knowing that they’ve agreed to stay the night with this small, makeshift group, but he knows they’re close to each other, from the way they’ve held on to each other throughout the entire night. Something that would make them go into an argument, Phil feels like it’s important.

“Nick, he...he’s been hearing tales from the villages we’ve been visiting.” One of them says, looking away from his partner with a sigh. “And he’s only decided to tell me about the possible end of the world *now* .”

Nick, who holds the paper in his hands with a hesitant face, shifts in his seat, leaning in towards his partner. “Well, it’s just recent, we don’t know-”

“What do you mean you don’t know, you just said that it would result in ‘total and utter despair and destruction’! Don’t sugarcoat it!” His partner snaps, waving his hands around as Phil holds back a snicker from the way he yells it.

“I’m trying to be optimistic!” Nick yells back, his voice squeaking for a moment, and he pauses to clear his throat, turning to Phil, who gives a questioning face. “Okay, okay, you mind listening to me ramble for a minute or two?”

“Go ahead mate, if it’ll help with your relationship problems.” Phil grins, crossing his arms. Someone snickers behind him.

Nick huffs, face a tad red as he smooths out the paper in his hands. “Bump in the road, I have a habit of delaying important details-”

“-end of the world shit, yes, that’s *definitely* something you should just keep from me for a whole two fucking weeks-” His partner mutters under his breath, Nick sighing loudly before continuing.

“ *Okay* , so, me and Lucas,” Nick nods a head to his partner, who stares off into the distance with a grumpy face. “We’ve traveled past more than a few towns in our, er, adventures. And each town, I tend to visit the churches, mostly because the priests there are usually kind, and I like a bit of luck and magic before we set off.” Nick shrugs, Phil humming and wrapping a hand around his necklace.

“Lately, though, I’ve gotten a few stories that have been, well, overlapping, between the priests and the more magical people of the town, and it’s painting a story I’m not sure I want to hear.”

Phil leans back on his heels, and he feels the warmth of the fire reach his wings, the people sitting around staring with a tense type of listening. There’s only been a handful of true tales and destinies written down in stone, and Phil’s heard them all before, they’re all a part of life.

The dragon that resides in the End, the rare summoning of Withers across the lands, the mindless, dangerous, nocturnal creatures that seek to only hurt, and the somewhat common sight of people like Phil, human-like, but not entirely.

It’s the way of life, in their world, and Phil knows it fairly well, a little too well, and he knows that the suggestion of something that important being brought up isn’t something to look over.

“What, is there a new type of world out there, or, or, an undiscovered creature?” Someone asks, eagerness flowing from their words as Phil shakes himself out of his thoughts.

“Not yet? I think.” Nick frowns, looking at the paper in his hands, sighing.

Lucas next to him reaches a hand out for the paper, and Nick gives it over, Lucas skimming over the words and finally giving the story everyone is waiting for.

“He’s been collecting tales from people across the towns we’ve been traveling in. So far, what he’s gotten is that something big is coming, an apocalypse type of threat.”

“What, so, creatures like the withers?” The woman with horns asks, Phil stepping to the side as everyone leans in.

“More.” Lucas says, face going dark. “Monsters specifically born to destroy and hurt. But not mindless, like the night ones. More like...” He trails off, eyes flicking to Phil.

The woman with horns swears loudly, and the group around Phil raises up in voices, yelling over each other with concerns and questions, Nick trying to answer the best he can.

Phil takes a few steps back, and no one sees him leave, and no one notices when he raises his wings out and goes into the sky, flying over the trees and out into the night. He's tired, and he knows he shouldn't push it too much, because it's going to end with a terrible mood in the morning, but his curiosity burns, and he can only wonder with a slight concern in his heart over the thought of something that big.

Half-monsters born only to create destruction in their path? It sounds like a cruel existence, and Phil knows more than anyone that every half-monster he's ever come across wants only peace and equality.

He's one of the lucky ones, one of the nicer looking ones. He's seen people with unnatural shaped mouths and unsettling appearances. He's seen people like him with hissing voices and jagged scars across their face, only for those same people to be the sweetest, kindest people he knows.

Sometimes, people like him have to face stupid people, people who are scared and act accordingly. Sometimes, the reputation of half-monsters gets hurt, from one stray tale of a desperate monster lashing out against cruel people.

Phil can't help them all, even if he's one of the lucky ones, even if he's one of the more 'approachable' ones, with features that makes most travelers admire him rather than be scared.

But if this tale is true.

If this story is true?

He needs to do *something* .

So he flies, over the trees and into the night, set on getting to the nearest village. And once he does, he will ask, he will find details, he will find more and more words and stories passed around, and he will keep looking.

Because while such a story like that, the first thing that a usual traveler might focus on is the threat, Phil can only think about the pain of someone to become such a threat.

So he flies.

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He gets to the village as the sun comes up, the air cold around him as he lands in the grass far off, choosing to walk the rest of the way through the field to the scattered buildings.

The grass is slightly wet underneath his shoes, and his back aches from flying the whole night, but he only yawns and tells himself that rest can wait, once he's sure of this.

There's only a few people walking along the street when Phil gets to the village, and a few give him the usual glances onto his wings, and he can't help the relief he feels when their eyes are full of awe rather than fear.

His wings have that effect. He's glad they do.

He makes a beeline straight to the church building, the bells ringing out across the small town as Phil stalks down the stone path, eyes set ahead with a sense of determination in his walk. People seem to move out of his way when he gets close, and usually he would lighten up his tone, and not be so fierce, but he needs to know.

He knocks against the wooden doors of the church three times, sighing as he feels fatigue creep up on him. He rolls his shoulders back and raises his chin, satisfied when he hears a

click of the door being unlocked, and the creak of the wood moving.

The church is quiet, dim, and warm, and the priest is kind and soft-spoken, not even giving a glance to Phil's wings, his necklace. On another day, Phil would be grateful. Instead, he gives his questions as soon as they're both inside.

He gets an answer.

Somehow, it's not the answer he wanted.

---

Sleep becomes scarce, in those weeks, as Phil flies from town to town, checking in people with all sorts of magic, visions and feelings. He carries around a journal, and writes down the details of it all, crafting together a proper telling.

As he figures it out, he's not the only one, because the stories spread, and travelers, common folk, kings and conquerors, the stories go across the lands as Phil lays it out for himself.

Within a few weeks, Phil has met over a dozen different people from each village, and they all tell the same.

Three children, three *monster* children are to be born in the years to come. They're supposed to be born with unimaginable abilities, powers that could destroy so much so easily. If they're left to grow, the world as everyone knows it, it'll fall into nothing but chaos.

As fear runs across the lands, so does a certain rushed panic, because from what the stories and visions and tellings say, the first one has already been born.

And so everyone rushes to find it, so that the start of something terrible can be put to an end before it makes a mark.

People are desperate, in the way that one fights against a Wither so it'll stop ravaging against their home, in the way that one rebels and defends with nothing much to lose except life itself.

Phil is even more desperate and even more determined, and when he finds a lead on the first child, a small kid said to have bright pink hair, blood red eyes, Phil holds a knife to someone's throat that night, and whispers threats, because he's desperate to stop the sort of destruction everyone is terrified of.

But he will *not* end it through killing a child.

He can only hope that he can find said child before anyone else does.

(And he will.)

# **The Blood God is a lot less dangerous than you'd think, actually**

## Chapter Notes

IF I JUST KEEP WRITING,,, THEN WRITERS BLOCK DOESN'T EXIST

yea yea I do be updating a story every day tho, WOO I am stupidly creative and I have too many story ideas, lets GO

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The first kid is rumored to be in a small, warm village, one that barely has any people at all, yet is never quiet. Specific details can't be found out, and people just get vague descriptions of that same village, small, warm, but never silent.

Phil flies to multiple towns, small towns with scattered buildings and roaring rivers beside them, and he searches for the description he has. Pink hair, blood red eyes. Should only be four years old, now. He comes up empty, even though the reports say the kid should be within the large area.

Phil isn't the only one searching, there's plenty of travelers, hunters, specific groups sent on their way with the sole purpose of finding the same kid Phil is looking for. Phil has a slight advantage, with his wings, and he may be exhausted these days, but he can travel quickly, through the skies.

Most of the stronger groups have their own horses and supplies, though, and they tend to catch up with Phil, a bit too quick for his comfort.

Rumors go around that there's a mysterious force protecting the first kid from being found. Really, it's just Phil poisoning people's water supply and making them get sick so he can get ahead.

Phil comes up empty again on his third town, one where he was sure that he would find the kid, but there's no one to the description there. The town is empty, too silent. It's hot, the sun coming down in a wave of heat, and the dust kicking up under Phil's shoes make him want to rest and take a drink.

He continues looking around, instead, and he finds old broken houses that are warm and full of cobwebs.

Walking into one of the homes, the door creaks loudly as he pushes it open, and the floorboards under him are covered with dust, dead bugs, and some stains that make Phil wonder who once fought here.

"Hello?" Phil says, and it resounds through the old house, the only sound that Phil can hear other than the creaking of the wood under his feet. "Is anyone here?"

It's empty, of course, and Phil walks into the house with hesitant steps, eyes dragging over the broken bookshelves and books scattered across the floor. The windows are cracked, and old torches lay in the corner, not having been lit for so long. The roof over Phil's head holds a giant hole, as if something crashed through it, leaving a crater beside Phil's feet, a dip in the broken wood floor.

He hears a hum.

It's not a person's hum, not someone singing, but a consistent, low, humming noise, almost unnatural. Phil copies it for a moment, before looking around, trying to focus on where it is.

He finds that it comes from right below him, and he takes careful steps around, the wood creaking in a way that he now knows is because they're hiding something.

Stretching his wings out as much as he can in the room he's in, Phil takes an axe to the ground and bashes through the wood, flapping himself off the ground when it starts to crumble, crashing below loudly.

There's dirt and dust thrown into the air, and Phil wipes at his face, sighing at the hot air that kicked up with the floor falling, and lowers himself down to whatever he's uncovered.

He finds a nether portal, bright purple, surrounded by rubble and discarded weapons. It's old, it's cracked at the edges, but it's still active. Phil wonders who made it, here, underneath an old town of all places. He wonders who fought here, who went through it.

He stands in front of it, in the stuffy air surrounding him, staring at the purple glow for a few minutes as he contemplates if this would be a waste of time or a lead. He doesn't have much time, he needs to keep searching, because he's not the only one traveling the lands, but he's the only one who seems to not want to end this in young blood.

It doesn't take long for him to go through it, sword gripped tightly in his hand.

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It's been a bit of a while since Phil's been in the nether. He knows the place well, he has friends who live there, who hide there, and he's gone there for resources time and time again.

The heat of it all, and the way the netherrack cracks under his feet when he walks, it's all familiar, he knows it too well.

One thing that throws him off is the houses made from blue wood, far off in the distance.

It's a small village, barely enough to be even considered a village at all, and as Phil approaches it, he can see a few people walking around, in their day to day life.

He keeps a distance, observing the village from afar, kneeling down behind a hill of netherrack, not wanting to bring attention to himself, with whatever this is.

There's cobblestone paths in between the houses, houses that are made from nether planks, wood that Phil recognizes is from the blue forests that reside here. The people look normal, human, and they're all suited up in some sort of armor, walking quickly wherever they go, always on guard.

A screech from a ghast distracts Phil, and he looks over to the sea of lava that's not too far, far down below the ledge that this town and Phil is on.

Phil's mind swarms with questions, for how long this village has been here, why would anyone other than monsters be living here, but he doesn't have long to think about it, because a fireball is coming his way.

He dodges it easily, kicking himself into the air and swinging his sword at his side as the ghast screeches again.

The fireball and explosion has given away the fact that he's here, and he can see people staring from the village, not coming to help, only watching as Phil maneuvers through the air, swinging his sword against the next fireball and hitting it, so it'll land somewhere where it won't make too much damage.

He has a bow on him, secured on his back, and he flies right towards the ghast, lava far below his feet as he grabs an arrow that's tucked away, pulling back the bow.

He dodges another fireball, and fires.

It hits perfectly, and Phil didn't expect otherwise, making his way back to solid ground, over to the village. The people still stay where they are, and Phil realizes it's because of how the houses are placed, it hides them just enough from any other threats. Phil had been out in the open, from the portal.

He glides over to the people, landing just a bit far off and putting his weapons away, making a slow walk towards them.

When he gets close, there's a moment of hesitant silence, as he scans the people's faces, all surprised and full of relief.

There's a screech of another ghast far off, and Phil hears the sound of something burning high up, fires burning on and on above the village.

A small town, warm, never silent.

Who would've thought it would be in the nether?

Phil clears his throat, the people shifting and murmuring to each other, a few look near tears.

"I'm looking for a kid, should be around four? Pink hair. Red eyes." Phil says, and he gets nods and hurried glances in response.

"Oh thank god, finally." Someone says, walking up to Phil, and he freezes a bit as they wrap in a hug. He thinks they might be crying. He's in a bit of an awkward situation.

"Finally, someone's here! Yes, we have it, it's here, I'm so sorry we couldn't end it ourselves, we just-" The woman takes a step back, wiping at her face, taking a moment to compose herself. "Oh, finally it's over."

"Sorry?" Phil asks, tilting his head as he looks around, seeing a few people walk off into the village with a hurried pace.

"The monster. We know about the apocalypse, the destruction it's supposed to bring." She says, and Phil feels his heart go cold.

“You know?” Phil repeats, feeling panic grips his heart, because they know, they have the kid and they’ve heard of it, so- “Is he alive?” Phil asks quickly, the woman nodding.

“Yes. We couldn’t do it ourselves, so we’ve been waiting.” She says, and Phil can’t say anything in response to that, his mouth feels dry as the realization dawns over him that this kid, the kid who has so much in his destiny, has been living in a village who has been desperately waiting for just one traveler to come over and kill the kid.

“Where is he?” Phil asks, and she sighs, giving Phil a smile before turning around.

Phil looks with her, down the cobblestone path of the town, and he sees it, a small glimpse of pink hiding underneath a small crevice under a building, one of the villagers trying to coax him out.

He’s so *small*, is the only thing Phil can think, because the kid looks like he would only reach up to Phil’s knees, and he can see a tiny hand swipe out at one of the villagers, refusing to move.

Phil walks past the woman with a rushed pace, and she takes a double take before following at Phil’s heels, stammering out more of an explanation. Phil really doesn’t need it. The kid is here, and he’s alive. That’s all Phil needs.

“We know that it would be better for us to kill it when it’s younger, but we all couldn’t do it when he was smaller, and we can’t do it now.” She says quickly, as the two of them go down the path. “We’re just people who want to be left alone. The last thing we wanted was the responsibility of killing a kid.”

“Hm.” Phil gives a hum in response, the people taking a few steps back as Phil comes closer. “I’m glad you didn’t.”

They stop in front of the little hole, and Phil kneels down, the woman taking a step back, everyone huddled around, far from Phil, watching with anticipation to see what he will do.

Phil barely pays attention to the people around him. Instead, he looks to the hole in the ground, and sees small hands resting at the opening, then a head pops up, eyes glowing.

The people behind Phil take a step back in fear, murmuring and on guard, wary.

Phil thinks he might be dying.

“Does he live there?” Phil asks, scooting closer, but not too much to spook the kid. Bright red eyes blink up at Phil, mesmerized, and Phil feels the same way, because there’s no possible way that the so-called ‘monster’ that’s supposed to bring death and destruction can be so...tiny.

He’s a pig hybrid, Phil can see it, the way his ears are pointed and the tusks just barely coming from his mouth. Maybe years from now, he would be appropriately terrifying, strong and deadly.

But right now, at this moment?

He’s cute.

There’s literally no other way Phil can describe him, with those bright red eyes.

“Yes, it’s been under there for a while now. We still can’t get it out.” The woman behind Phil says, slight bitterness on her tongue. “We sometimes kick food under, out of mercy’s sake.”

Phil nods, but he really isn’t listening, him and the kid locked in a staring contest. The kid looks away first, and it’s to stare at Phil’s gold hair, hanging loosely around his shoulders.

“Are you going to kill it?” Someone asks, voice hesitant, and the village holds their breath as Phil moves closer to the little gap, hands reaching in to where the monster resides.

*He’s a madman* , some of them think. *He’s going to get his hand bitten off, he’s going to get killed* . The people are dead-silent, frozen with fear as Phil leans forwards and reaches his arms in, a few people considering pulling Phil back for his own safety.

It’s not needed, though, and Phil pulls the kid out of the hole, setting him on his feet. He stays kneeling on the ground, hands brushing off the dirt on the kid’s shirt, and the village has taken multiple steps back now, eyes wide.

“Now what’s your name?” Phil asks quietly, as the kid stares at Phil’s hair, before reaching a hand out and yanking at it. “Ow-”

Someone in the crowd gasps, Phil thinks he might see someone actually faint, from how they’re acting, and he just turns his head to them, trying to get his hair to stop getting tugged at.

“Uh, does he have a name?” Phil asks, grinning out into the crowd, who stare at him like he’s on his deathbed.

“Technoblade.” Someone mumbles, and the crowd nods, murmuring amongst themselves. “The blood god, that’s his name.”

“Ah.” Phil takes that in, a bit amused at the dramatic naming. But Techno turns his head when someone says it, and the crowd shrinks back, seeming to immediately regret saying his name at all. “Techno, then?”

Techno turns back to Phil, and still has a hand tangled in his hair, Phil gently tugging his grip off before standing up.

“Kill it now, quickly!” Someone whispers out, as Phil stretches his arms up, yawning. God, he needs a nap.

“Yes, hurry!” Someone agrees, and the crowd gives out words of encouragement, to hurry, do it now.

Phil resists the urge to scoff.

“I’m not killing the kid, look at him.” He waves a hand to Techno, who stares at Phil’s outstretched hand, before grabbing Phil’s pinky with a loose grip. Phil has to clear his throat and keep his attention on the scared crowd as Techno turns Phil’s hand over, looking at it with curiosity. “He’s not going to hurt you.”

“He will! Maybe not now, but soon! You have to stop it while you still can! That’s why you’re here, aren’t you?!” The woman who led Phil yells, stepping in front of the crowd.

Phil levels her with a blank look, blinking and letting her sit in suffocating silence, before glancing down to Techno, who looks up with those same bright, red eyes, oh, he’s just *adorable*-

“No.” Phil says simply, smiling down at the piglin. Techno gives an imitation of a smile back, baring his teeth and showing the small sharp fangs off. Someone does actually faint out of fear when he does that.

Phil gently pulls his hand away from Techno, stepping in front of the kid. “I’m not here to kill him. I’m planning on taking him in, raising him.”

The crowd looks at him like he’s lost his mind.

Phil couldn’t care less, because Techno behind him has noticed Phil’s wings, and he reaches a hand out to them, curiosity written all over his face. Phil shifts his feathers and snickers when

Techno nearly jumps, surprised at the fact that the wings even move. Make sense, really, if the nether is all he knows. Phil will make sure that it won't be forever, though.

"Raise him..?" The woman trails off, and Phil turns his head back to the people, half of the crowd having retreated away from the lunatic that is Phil, the other half keeping far, far distance with wide eyes. "You want to care for a *monster*, a creature that will tear apart life as we know it-?"

"I mean, mate," Phil nods his head to Techno, who glances at the woman for a moment, the woman taking a small step back. "He's just a little pig."

She stares at Phil like he's absolutely insane, and Phil is getting tired of these looks already, he's itching to pick up the kid and leave. But she clears her throat, straightening up before trying to get it through Phil's head again.

"You do understand that you're caring for the very thing that is meant to bring destruction and chaos to our world, right?" The woman asks, Phil looking behind him fondly as a tiny Techno grabs at the ends of his wings, fascinated by the feathers.

"He's just a child." Phil answers distractedly, humming as his wings get gently yanked at.

"He's the first of three to destroy life as we know it! Shouldn't we, well, get rid of him?!"

"Oh, no." Phil raises his eyes back to the woman, a silent threat in his words. "Believe me, I have my own way of preventing the apocalypse."

She stays silent at that, and Phil shrugs, turning to the kid again, who lets out a small squeal at Phil's feathers getting pulled away from his reach.

"Okay, Techno. Come on." He kneels down, reaching his arms out, and Techno goes to grab his hair first, before staring into Phil's eyes, Phil staring patiently back. Then he gets what

Phil's asking, and leans forward, wrapping an arm around Phil's neck, but still keeping a hand in his hair.

Phil's not sure what the deal is with that. Maybe the kid is just grabby.

Either way, Phil picks up Techno off the ground, sighing happily at the relief in his chest at finally having this kid out of danger, in Phil's arms.

He turns to the woman, and the few people still scattered around, speechless at the fact Phil's just picked up the thing they've perceived as a dangerous threat for the past few months.

"Well. Have a good day." Phil waves a hand, then he's off, flying up into the air.

He makes his way over the buildings and back to the portal, hearing some yelling as he goes, but he just ignores it in favor of looking at Techno, who's holding on for dear life, looking very surprised at the fact they're now off the ground. Not scared, though, and Phil's glad for that.

Phil ignores the screech of a ghaist noticing them, and goes straight to the portal, holding on tight to Techno and going right through to the other side.

It's still dusty when he walks out, and he sneezes before flying his way up out of the broken basement, and he makes his way out of the house, into the sunlight and the blue sky.

He walks away from the village, holding back another yawn and instead making some internal plans on where to rest for the night, going through the grassy field.

Glancing down to Techno, he finds that the kid has his eyes squeezed shut, his face half hidden into Phil's shirt, a death grip on a lock of Phil's hair.

“You can open your eyes now.” Phil says softly, and he only gets a small noise in response, Techno barely nudging. Phil stops where he is, looking around at the green field, peaceful and quiet, a gentle breeze flowing through.

“There’s nothing scary. Look.” Phil whispers, and he holds Techno’s head close to his, Techno opening his eyes just the slightest bit to see Phil’s face. Phil glances up, and after a second, Techno copies, looking up as well.

After that, he can’t get Techno to stop staring at the blue sky.

## Chapter End Notes

Everyone in the world: This kid is threat to humanity

Phil, a minute after seeing Techno: I can't hear you I'm too busy loving my new son

lmao thanks for reading

# My son, my son

## Chapter Notes

oh yeah, tiny Techno brainrot

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

One thing that Phil notices right off the bat after acquiring one Technoblade in his care, is that he's very quiet. Observant, curious, and brave, no doubt, but he's silent, never saying a word, and only making a few sounds here and there, a squeal whenever Phil doesn't let him hold his hair right away, a small whine when he's woken up from sleep.

He can understand Phil just fine, he seems to know language as a whole, it's only that he doesn't say a word in response.

Phil doesn't mind. The kid is good company anyway.

On the first three days of having Techno, Phil puts away his worries for the next kid, for the ongoing search that will need to continue, and works on gaining trust, because the last thing he wants is for Techno to be under his watch, but to not *trust* Phil.

Techno has a liking to gold, it seems, for when Phil looks through the gold coins in his bag, wanting to count and see what he has for the next town they'll eventually travel to, Techno practically throws himself forward, reaching into Phil's bag and nabbing at whatever coins he can grab in his tiny hands.

He grabs a few handfuls, and tries to hold them all, even as they spill and fall onto the forest floor, and Phil laughs when Techno looks up at him with pleading eyes, as if he's asking for Phil to help and to make the coins stop falling.

“I need those, Techno, I was counting them.” Phil says gently, leaning forward and reaching for the few coins dropped in the dirt, collecting them up in his palm. Techno makes an annoyed noise as he drops another coin.

They’re hiding out in the middle of a forest, a small campfire put to the side, a little bed of leaves on the ground. Phil doesn’t mind sleeping on the forest floor, he’s slept in worse places, and Techno seems to not have any problem with sleeping right on Phil, with Phil’s wings covering him and shielding him from the cold at night.

The first nights are everything to Phil, and the first time Phil tells Techno to sleep, Techno lays down beside Phil, shoving his face into Phil’s shoulder and curling up into a ball, trying to be as small as possible.

Phil can’t help himself in scooping up the kid into his arms, tucking Techno’s head under his chin and staring up at the stars, his heart squeezing as Techno falls to sleep, barely visible under the feathers, a hand holding onto Phil’s hair, even then. He’s so *small*, and Phil swears over and over to any gods that are out there that he will give everything to make sure Techno will grow up safe.

Phil sleeps lightly, these days, half so he’ll notice if Techno wakes up, half so he can run if they get found out by anyone else. He doesn’t know if word has traveled yet, of Phil taking the first kid, but he doesn’t want to take chances, so he travels carefully, stays vigilant.

But for this morning, it’s quiet and calm, and Techno runs around the smoldering campfire when Phil tries reaching for his coins back, giving a weary smile at the piglin, who only blinks back, arms full of gold.

Techno has a liking to gold, for sure, and that seems to translate to why he grabs Phil’s hair so often, but it’s also not the only reason, because Techno seems to also have a liking to anything soft.

Phil can’t imagine there’s anything soft and comfortable in the nether, especially in that little hole Techno had been residing in, so it makes sense in the way that Techno grabs onto his hair, or is fascinated with Phil’s wings, sticking his small hands into them when Phil’s asleep, Phil having to wake up to someone attacking his feathers.

Even right now, Techno is entirely content, with Phil's robe around his shoulders, coins falling over in his hands as he sits on the floor.

Phil had been able to scrub most of the dirt off of Techno in a nearby river, and while Techno's clothes looked ragged and worn, Phil told himself they would just have to work until he got new clothes from the next village. So he gave his outer layer of clothes to Techno, and while the fabric hardly fit, and it dragged on the floor as Techno moved around, he refused to let go of it, and the piglin rubs his face against the sleeves every now and then when he thinks Phil isn't watching.

Techno's hair is pulled back neatly in intricate braids, courtesy of Phil and his knowledge of doing hair. Techno had enjoyed it when Phil tended to his bright pink hair, now clear of dirt, after Phil had washed it out. Phil had combed out the slight tangles with his fingers and wove them into a braid, and when he was done, Techno had turned and given Phil a confused look, as if asking why he had stopped tending to his hair. When he realized it was up in a braid, he ran his small fingers over it in wonder, then knelt up to Phil and tugged at Phil's own golden hair.

Small moments like that, little moments where Techno looks to him with thoughtful red eyes and reaches a hand out, it makes Phil's heart rest easy, stress falling away for just a few minutes longer, because this isn't the end, Phil still has two more kids to save, but Techno is a good distraction for a day or two.

Phil enjoys the responsibility given to him, enjoys the way that he wakes up to Techno poking at his wings, and falls to sleep with Techno holding onto his hair. Techno follows behind him wherever he goes, watches with curious eyes at the side of the river when Phil is busy catching fish with the simple dagger he keeps on him.

At one point, he tries holding his hand out to Phil with pleading eyes, wanting to hold the weapon, use it the way Phil does. Phil doesn't hand it over, and only insists that Techno puts his feet in the water first, and when Techno squeals at the chill of the river, Phil laughs. After that, Techno doesn't try asking for the dagger again, and glares at the rushing water like it's cursed him.

Techno doesn't like the cold, Phil finds. Which makes sense, he runs warm, and comes from the nether as a whole, the chill of the night and the freezing river is something Techno has never dealt with, and it's something he decides he doesn't like.

When he gets too cold at night, he hits a small fist against Phil until he wakes up, so that Phil will wrap his wings tighter around him and keep the night chill out. He absolutely refuses to leave Phil's arms in the early morning, when the chill still hasn't left the forest.

The first time he saw the river was something Phil thought was hilarious, for Techno approached it like the water would reach out and bite him. He had actually panicked when Phil took off his shoes and walked into the moving water, Techno holding out his arms and making a distressed cry as Phil gave words of reassurance that he was fine.

Techno wouldn't follow Phil into the water, but he was fine with Phil carrying him over the rushing currents, and he stared at the river below him, at the few fish that swam by, and would look to Phil with questioning eyes, as if asking why the river was so quick.

Phil tended to fill the silence between them by rambling on and explaining all he could about the world around him. Techno never had to ask a single question, and Phil would answer them all.

“-it just keeps on going, the water moves along the rocks and it carries the fish through the forest, all the way to a lake, maybe, or even an ocean, and oh, I bet you won't like the ocean that much, mate, it can be even colder than this, sometimes-” He had went on, carrying Techno over the river and pointing out the light blue of the currents. Techno had been able to stick a hand into the water after Phil explained what it was, but he did not like it at all, for it was freezing. He liked it even less when Phil had to scrub dirt off his face in the river, and he clinged to Phil for warmth as Phil continued to tell Techno of the ocean, of the water.

“-don't go staring at the sun too much, it's not good for your eyes. You can stare at the clouds though, look, see, they move through the sky, look at how they're all so big, so vast-” Phil told, Techno turning his head down as soon as Phil warned against the sun, but hesitantly looking up again when Phil pointed a finger up to the clouds, and Techno pointed up a hand as well, staring at a bird flying high.

“-that’s a cricket, mate. Hear it? They’re small little things, they can’t do much, but they love talking, late at night-” Phil whispered as Techno laid in his arms under the stars, eyes wide and wary as a cricket chirped near their campfire, Phil letting him know that the sound was just of a small creature, and nothing harmful.

“-and I know you’re not listening to this one, but I swear it seems like something you’d love. They’re all quite bright, up there, and the moon as well, constantly lighting up the night sky over our heads-” Phil murmured quietly, as Techno listened while half asleep, the two of them staring up at the sky through the trees.

A few days of living in the forest, Phil’s gotten restless, and Techno has gotten tired of the food that Phil feeds him, simple greens found by the riverbank, a few fish caught out of the water.

So Phil stretches his arms up with a yawn, and plans for the next village, and puts Techno to sleep early, while the sun is still up.

Techno gives him a confused look when Phil lays down with him, and Phil explains that they need to travel, but it has to be at night, when they can move under the dark, and not be spotted.

Techno seems to understand anyway, and shoves his head into Phil’s shirt, falling to sleep within minutes. Phil closes his eyes with him, and wakes up to the light night sky, sunset just barely ending, the last bits of sun fading away.

Phil takes back his robe from Techno, checks his bag, lets Techno run a hand through the coins, and makes sure he has his knife on him, and he picks up Techno in his arms, stretches out his wings.

“Remember the first day, Techno, where I had flown out of the portal?” Phil asks, looking up at the dim sky, Techno shaking his head. “No, you had your eyes closed, didn’t you? Keep them open this time, I swear, it’ll be okay.”

Then he's off, and Phil leaves the ground with a grin, Techno holding onto his shirt with a death grip, leaning in as close as possible as Phil flies above the trees, above the forest.

The land is beautiful, even in the dim moonlight, and Techno turns his head up and down, up to the clouds over their heads, down to the trees passing under them both. He looks to Phil with a toothy grin, copying Phil's own expression.

There's a village not too far off, and it only takes a few minutes of flying before Phil sees the lights of the buildings, the stone paths of the streets.

He lands nearby, and holds Techno close, walking quickly and silently, making his way around the back of the buildings rather than out in the street. It's a small town, quiet with nightfall, and only a few people walk past, Phil making sure to avoid each one. Techno stays absolutely silent the entire time, and Phil knows it's because he's explained the danger of others finding him, he's explained as kindly as he could, that other people can be dangerous and cruel, and that while there's kind people out there, Techno needs to be careful.

Techno hadn't entirely understood that one, only stared at Phil's wings, grabbed at the necklace around Phil's neck, and stared on in silence, a thousand thoughts running through his head.

Phil spots a small clothes shop soon enough, looking empty of customers but still open and he moves to it with light steps, making his way across the street.

There's a bell that rings as he walks in, and a person at the counter. The shop is full of fabrics and clothes on display, tucked away beside the walls, and Techno looks to the person at the counter, to the fabrics laying around, then looks to Phil and demands to be let down by hitting a small fist against Phil's shoulder.

"Okay, okay, mate! Go play, but don't mess up anything." Phil says softly, and Techno takes off running as soon as he's put down, going to run his hands over whatever he can reach.

The person at the counter is a bright young woman, smiling warmly as she sees Techno run off into the small shop, and she turns to Phil with a friendly nod. "Hello, welcome to Emi's

Fabrics.” She chimes, and looks to Techno again with a fond look as Phil puts his bag onto the counter in front of him.

“Your son is cute. We don’t get much kids with the travelers these days, much less ones who are this excited over clothes.” She says, as Techno messes with the curtains by a small window.

“He likes the texture of soft things, I think.” Phil shrugs, and the woman’s eyes glance to the wings on Phil’s back, looking shocked for a moment before catching herself.

“Ah- well, that’s something I’ll keep in mind. I’m sure I’ll have some shirts his size that are soft enough.” She smiles, and Phil recognizes the small look of curiosity, of wanting to ask questions, because half-monster people, that’s always something others have questions over.

“Do you have any shoes, as well?”

“I believe I do, there’s quite a few stored in the back, we don’t usually put them on display, they tend to get stolen.” She nods, Phil glancing to the few outfits up on display, to the window in the front that shows off the clothes to the street. The window is half covered by a curtain, and Phil wants to pull the curtain all the way as a small group of people come down the street, torches in hand, and swords at their sides.

“Now who is that?” Phil mumbles, and Emi hums, waving a hand.

“A hunting group, looking for the blood god.” She explains, as if it's a normal occurrence, and it really must be, with so many in the lands looking for Techno. “People like them come through the village every now and then, the kid still hasn’t turned up, but they’re still searching.”

Phil watches as Techno fiddles with the curtains, and he holds a hand out, whispering harshly. “Techno. Stay away from the windows.”

Techno freezes, and as does the woman at the counter, eyes going wide. Techno takes a slow step back from the end of the curtain, then moves forward again, moving the curtain all the way so the display window isn't showing through, the inside of the shop hidden from the people in the street. He looks to Phil to see if that was alright, and Phil nods, smiling. Techno goes to close the other curtains.

"I'm sorry, I, uh." She clears her throat, smiling. "What, is your son's name, may I ask?"

Phil glances to Techno, who closes the curtain of the other small window, then goes off to play with some fabrics hanging off a nearby table.

"Techno." Phil answers, reaching down under his coat.

"Techno..." She trails off. Her smile is strained. "Lovely name. I, do you mind if I grab something from storage-" She goes to move her arms away from the counter, eyes looking at Techno, Techno, with his pink hair, pointed ears, small little tusks-

Phil moves quickly, and stabs his dagger into the counter, right where the woman's sleeve is, and he leans in close, talking quietly. "Technoblade. His name is Technoblade, and I know *very well* who he is. And I know *you* know who he is."

She looks at Phil with wide eyes, taking in a shaky breath, eyes flicking to Techno and back to Phil. "You- there's a cursed child in my shop, you've brought a dangerous beast into my shop-?"

"He's really not that dangerous, mate." Phil says tiredly, looking to Techno, glad to see that the kid is busy playing with the ends of hanging shirts, not noticing Phil threatening the shop owner with a knife. "Let me make this clear. I'm here to get some new clothes for my son, some new shoes, then we can go on our way."

"Your *son*- ?!" She whispers back, leaning in with a face of disbelief. "That thing cannot be your son, listen, there's those men outside, for the good of everyone, let's just-"

Phil narrows his eyes. “You try calling for those hunters, you’re going to lose a finger.”

She only gives an unimpressed look and responds snarkily, and Phil likes her for the fact that she’s definitely panicking, yet still says a response that makes Phil want to roll his eyes.

“Ah, lose a finger or lose my life, which one do you think I prefer?!” She whispers, Phil raising his eyebrows.

“Really? Look at him. He’s tiny.” He waves a hand to Techno, who’s currently running his hands along the layers of a coat, marveling at the fluffy material at the ends of it. “Do you honestly believe he’s going to hurt you?”

She looks conflicted for a moment, then, “The stories-”

“Yes, yes, the tales, the destiny, I know.” Phil leans back, keeping a loose grip on the knife stuck into the counter, and reaching into his bag, grabbing a single coin. “Watch.” He says to her, and turns his head to Techno.

“Techno. Look, come here.” Phil calls, and Techno looks at Phil, and spots the coin in his hand, then runs over, nearly tripping over his feet. He runs into Phil’s legs, then reaches a hand up to the coin Phil’s holding, hopping up once, twice, tugging at Phil’s shirt.

The woman leans over the counter to look at Techno, and blinks in shock at the sight of Techno just wanting the coin, giving a frustrated face to Phil when Phil only keeps holding it up too high. A small squeak comes from the kid, and Phil hands the coin over, Techno grabbing it and running off, sliding under a table.

“...a coin.” Emi says softly, and Phil hums. “The blood god has been tamed with a single *coin*.”

“He likes gold.” Phil says, turning his head to the woman again as she stares at the table Techno’s under. “And soft things.”

She looks at him with an absolutely confused face, and Phil just smiles.

“So, do you think you could get some clothes and shoes for him, so we can get on our way? Because it really isn’t safe for us to be out right now, with him.” Phil asks, and for a moment, she looks to the wings on Phil’s back, lost in thought.

Then she sighs, looking at her sleeve still stuck to the counter with a knife, and looking at Techno again. “Alright. But once you leave, you know I’ll have to tell others of this.”

“That’s fine. I can keep him safe.” Phil responds, and pulls the knife out of the counter.

## Chapter End Notes

\*drops this at your feet\* do ya like it?

I feel like my writing is kinda all over the place, but that is OKAY because I am here to just get the words out, and hopefully they are out in a way that is pleasing.

But yes. Tiny Techno. He will be very strong and dangerous one day.

But right now he just want coin, soft things, and Phil's hugs, and you know what, valid.

Thanks for readin!

# What makes a monster?

## Chapter Notes

hoo boy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

They move to the small room in the back, mostly full of boxes of storage, chests of supplies, and Phil keeps watch with Techno trying on different clothes, clean, new clothes. And while it's wonderful for Techno to finally have something that isn't just rags from the nether, it's still a bit of a pain, because the first shirt they try doesn't quite fit, too long past the arms, but Techno refuses to take it off, getting attached to the first thing that's an upgrade from his old clothes.

He nearly whines when Phil tugs the shirt off, and he sits on the floor with an angry look, upset that his soft fabric has been taken away, however, he does raise his head when Phil raises up another option.

Phil has to coax him with the promise of a gold coin to be patient, and he tells Techno about clothes needing to actually *fit*, not just be soft, and while Phil gets narrowed eyes and a frown in response, Techno listens. He's still upset whenever Phil swaps out a new shirt, though, and so Phil tries to keep the options short.

Emi eyes Techno the entire time they try outfits on, hesitant and wary, as if any second from now, Techno will snap and murder both her and Phil. She walks over with a pair of shoes, places them at Phil's side, then quickly walks off, eyes still wary, still staring.

Techno doesn't seem to notice, too entranced with the next shirt Phil's tugged over his head, and he grips a gold coin in his tiny hand as he wraps his arms around himself, enjoying the change in fabric, looking up at Phil as if asking if this one suffices. It doesn't, it's too small, and Techno hits his head against Phil's arm when Phil goes to tug it off again. Phil only laughs.

They settle on a pair of black shorts, falling just over his knees, and nice long sleeved white shirt, and Techno doesn't let Phil help button it up, whacking his hands away to try doing it himself. It takes a moment, but he gets it, and Phil gives an appropriate smile when Techno looks up at him for a reaction. Techno smiles back when he realizes he gets to keep this shirt.

After that, they grab some soft white socks, which Techno absolutely adores, kicking Phil in the gut a few times to get Phil to notice, as if Phil wasn't the one to put them on for him.

The shoes, though, those weren't so easy.

Phil's sat Techno down on a small wooden bench pushed against the wall, and he grabs a pair of boots that Emi had brought along. Kneeling in front of the kid, he ignores the way Techno stares at the shoes with a face, and is relieved to find that they fit just fine, tugging them onto Techno's feet.

Techno doesn't like it.

"No, Techno, mate, shoes are important-" Phil tries saying, holding Techno in his arms, Techno kicking his feet wildly to try and get the boots off, having quickly jumped off the bench to try throwing the boots off. He doesn't seem to mind Phil holding onto him, keeping him still, he just hates the boots.

Emi lingers in the doorway of the backroom, and watches with curious eyes as Techno gives something along the lines of a tantrum, except without the crying and screaming. He just won't stop kicking.

"-what if the ground gets too cold to walk on? Or too hot? You need shoes to actually *help*-" Phil says, keeping an arm around Techno, reaching down to Techno's leg to tug at one of the boots, which look dangerously close to being kicked off.

"No!" Techno says, half muffled in Phil's shirt, and Phil goes still, because that's the first word he's heard Techno even say, ever since he's picked him up from the nether. In his shock, Techno kicks a boot off, sending it flying away, hitting the wall before it lands on the ground with a thump.

“No?” Phil repeats, grinning down at Techno, who makes a frustrated noise, trying to kick off the other boot.

“No!” Techno says again, and nearly kicks the other boot off, Phil pulling it off for him instead, putting it to the side. *Then* Techno calms down, and seems content with leaning against Phil, still kicking his legs, but just absentmindedly, rather than in a way of trying to get shoes off. He nods to himself, seeming content.

“No, no.” Phil says fondly, tugging lightly at the small ponytail behind Techno’s head, Techno whining. “Why not?”

He waits for a response, Techno staring at him, before leaning forward and face planting into Phil’s shoulder, like that will make them move on.

“Technoblade.” Phil snickers, gently pushing at Techno to sit back up. “Why not? Do they not fit?”

Phil wonders if maybe Techno just isn’t used to shoes, after being barefoot for so long. It makes sense if he would hate them then, there’s a slim chance Techno ever tried on shoes over in the nether. However, Phil can’t just let Techno go without any, because if they’re going to be moving, Techno needs to be walking, and while Techno hates the boots, Phil thinks that Techno would also hate having something poke him in the foot.

Techno tries to hug Phil again, and Phil has to hold back a laugh at the look he gets in response at stopping him, Techno acting as if Phil’s committed treason, done something unthinkable.

“Mate, you can’t just frown your way out of shoes.” Phil says, Techno frowning even more intensely. “Do you just not like shoes?”

“I don’t want ‘em.” Techno shakes his head, sentence coming out quick and mumbled, and Phil raises his eyebrows, not being able to stop the grin on his face.

“You don’t want boots? Or just shoes in general?” Phil asks, patient, reaching over to grab the boot he’s put aside. The other shoe is still across the room, from Techno kicking it off.

Techno makes a face, eyeing the boot in Phil’s hand.

“You need shoes, Techno.”

“No.”

“I can’t just carry you everywhere.”

Techno really frowns at that, scrunching his nose.

Phil laughs quietly, smiling wide, and Techno stares at his face with a thoughtful look, then goes still as a bell rings out. Phil stills as well, eyes going wide as there’s footsteps in the front of the shop, the bell ringing again as the door opens.

Emi is still by the doorway, and she glances to Phil, who wraps his arms and wings around Techno, eyes wide, nearly pleading.

She walks out to the counter, Phil holding his breath. Techno is absolutely silent under him.

“Hello! Ah, this is the clothes shop, right?”

“Yes, I-” Emi pauses, Phil looking around for anywhere to just run, but there isn’t a backdoor over here, and if he wanted to get away with Techno, he would have to go through whoever just walked in. It’s a matter if the lady is going to scream for help or not, and Phil slowly and quietly gets to his feet, Techno holding onto his neck. Phil keeps a hand on the knife at his

side, staring at the doorway. “You’re at the right place! However, I regret to inform you, we are closed.”

Phil feels the tiniest amount of relief in his chest, but he doesn’t relax, still waiting for the worst scenario. He doesn’t want to hurt anyone in order to get out, but that doesn’t mean he’ll hesitate.

“The door was open, though...?” The traveler asks, voice trailing off.

“Was it?” Emi says, voice full of false cheer, polite and chipper. “Oh, I must’ve forgot to lock it. But, as you can see, I did close the curtains, and I was just in the back, checking storage.”

Phil allows himself a small smile, happy to know he’s being covered, and he makes a mental note to leave a tip for her kindness.

“I’ll be quick.” The traveler offers, Emi laughing.

“You can be here in the morning, bright and early, and I’ll be sure to sell you some deals then. However, I will need to ask you to go now. I do need to head home.”

“Aw, worth a shot. Thanks anyway.”

“Mhm-hm.” And there’s the sound of footsteps, and the bell of the door.

Phil waits, and hears footsteps coming along again, Emi appearing at the doorway, looking conflicted as she sees Phil, standing in the middle of the small room, holding Techno in his arms, Techno barely visible under his feathers.

He folds his wings back, rubbing a hand over Techno’s back, giving a small smile.

“Thank you.” Phil whispers, Emi sighing.

“I don’t know why I did that.” She admits, leaning against the doorframe.

“I’m glad you did either way.” Phil says, putting Techno down.

They move on from the tense moment, Phil having to coax Techno to put on his boots, coming to an agreement that Techno will put on the shoes just before they leave, but for now, as he goes through a pile of warm coats, he can just stay in his socks, and be left to choose on which one he wants.

Phil stands to the side, holding the small boots in his arms as Emi stands beside him, staring at Techno, who’s running his hands along the different types of coats laid out, making a face at a particularly scratchy one.

“You know one day he’s going to be dangerous. He’s going to grow up.” Emi says, hesitantly, trying to warn Phil of what’s to come. She sees Techno now, fussing with the fabric, rubbing his face against wool, and only sees potential for something that can become terrible.

Phil sees differently. “Ah, my heart won’t be able to take that. I’ll be thinking back on this, wishing he was small again.” Imagining Techno grown up, taller than Phil, maybe, that kind of thought just makes him smile.

Emi turns her head to Techno again, crossing her arms. Techno’s struggling to put on a jacket, and once he finally has his arms through the sleeves, he keeps it on for a solid three seconds before deciding he doesn’t like it, taking it off and throwing it to the ground. “...he’s almost like a kid.” Emi quietly murmurs.

“He is a kid. Full through.” Phil nods, giving a bright grin to Techno when Techno looks up to him, pointing at the jacket on the floor, and then kicking it to the side. Phil gives a thumbs up in understanding. Techno moves on.

“He’s a monster in the making. I don’t know if you realize that, but you’ve signed yourself up for more than you can think of.” Emi turns her head to Phil, who only looks on at Techno.

“I signed myself up to take care of him. To protect him.” Phil response, voice calm.

“He’s a threat to the world!” Emi whispers harshly, eyes glancing to Techno for a split second.

Phil sighs, then turns his head to the woman, looking done. “He’s a kid who’s been saddled with a bullshit prophecy, and is being hunted down for simply existing. He’s done nothing wrong.”

“And if *you’re* wrong? If one day he goes against you, snaps at you? What then? How are you going to defend him when he’s killed and has blood on his hands? There’s a reason his name is ‘Blood God’.”

And how Phil wishes it wasn’t. He makes a mental note to keep the other two kids from being named anything along those lines. Techno’s already processed his name, responds to it. Phil won’t put him through the confusion and work of forcing a new name onto him. But for the other kids, he wants to get there soon enough so they don’t have to have such a name that promises destruction.

“I don’t think you get it, mate.” Phil says, watching as Techno pokes around at a certain blue coat, eyes curious. “It doesn’t matter what he does. Anything that happens, either tomorrow or years from now, I’ll still watch over him. I’m still going to love him.”

“...you’re a little insane.” Emi says in response.

“Maybe.” Phil admits, watching as Techno finds a coat that has fluffy wool on the inside of the hood, looking ecstatic “But I just know, he doesn’t deserve to be killed for simply existing. I’ll raise him well, even if it means it’ll end up in me being dead.”

“Will you regret it then, after he’s killed you?” Emi asks, almost bitterly.

“No.” Phil smiles, Techno turning to him with a hood over his head, a new coat on. “No, I won’t regret it at all.”

---

They leave the shop soon after, new clothes, new boots, and Emi giving them a half wave and some words before they go.

“I’ll have to tell others of this, in the morning. I didn’t sell you out earlier, because, I just-” She says, standing by the door, the night sky full of stars over their heads.

“It’s alright. I’ll be long on my way by then.” Phil nods, Techno in his arms, frowning at the fact he has shoes on. But he’s happy with the coat he’s picked out, and after Phil says his goodbyes, they’re both off, flying into the sky.

Phil’s set to go as far as possible from the village, from where he found Techno. He needs to wait for Techno’s reputation to simmer down, for people to eventually give up on finding him months later. He knows that he’s going to end up in tales, stories passed from person to person, a winged traveler taking the kid meant to destroy them all, and taking it in as a son.

Personally, he doesn’t mind it. Finds it a bit funny, if anything.

So he flies, off to another village far off, hoping to make it there and rest up, pass time traveling and exploring until the location of the next kid can be found out.

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The months pass rather quickly, for Phil. They land in the village, find an inn to stay, Techno’s face and hair hidden away under his hood, into Phil’s shirt, and they spend the night

in a proper bed, Techno stealing the pillow.

They stay in the village for a little while, a few days, Phil talking with Techno, walking him through the town, letting him explore and see, and learn.

Phil's never been much of a teacher, and as much as he can try, he's not exactly the best at teaching Techno to read, write. But there's a library, near the inn, and Techno runs his hands over the bookcases, flips through pages, not a clue on what they mean, what they say.

Phil reads to him. Reads story after story, night after night, and Techno listens on and on, never sleeping until Phil's finished the chapter, and even then, he still asks, (quietly, sparefully, his words come more often, but he's still soft spoken) for another one. One night, Phil complies, and he ends up reading all the way up to sunrise, passing out on the bed, waking up to Techno running his hands over the pages, trying to make sense of the letters for himself, since Phil won't do it for him.

He goes to the librarian, then, who's a kind, sweet old lady, observes Phil's wings with a sad type of fascination, holding onto his arm as if Phil's gone through too much. Phil's been through plenty. But he's not too upset over it.

She agrees to help Techno learn, and Techno is wary, refuses to sit by her, only with Phil, and they work it out in the first few weeks, the woman having to sit across the table, Phil sitting beside Techno as they work through letters.

Technoblade picks it up fast, and seems determined to copy the librarian's neat handwriting exactly. She's a fancy type of writer, her letters curved and neat, pretty to look at, and Techno refuses to try writing any other way, trying again when he doesn't write an A the same way she does.

Phil only smiles, and watches in silence for those weeks, as Techno listens quietly to the lady, practices back at the inn, on the floor with papers all around, pencil scribbling away, writing the letters over and over, neat, curved.

They move to reading, sounding out letters, and Techno goes from stumbling over sentences to quickly moving on to actual books. It becomes so that *he* reads Phil to sleep, instead, Phil listening to Techno speak quietly, stutter over a word here and there late at night.

They stay in the town for over half a year, which turns into a whole year, too quick, too fast for Phil, who watches Techno grow and learn, and eventually come out of his shell. He's still shy, that just seems to be his personality, wary of anyone who isn't Phil, careful around people he does know, like the kind old librarian, or the smiley baker who Phil always buys treats from.

He's a quiet kid, to most. But he loves to ramble to Phil, late at night, asking and asking, and still grabbing at Phil's hair. He doesn't tug it, not anymore, but he sometimes attempts to braid it, like how Phil does with Techno's hair, always tying it back in a neat, pink braid.

Phil's had plenty of experience with hairstyles, so Techno's hair is always nice looking. And Technoblade insists on learning, and Phil lets him, guides him through it.

They stay for a while, in that town, and it makes a mark in Phil's heart, memories all around. He doesn't want to stay in place, wants to keep moving, wants to be wary, but this town is far, rather isolated, in the trees, and they don't have a priest, or anyone with magic to tell of Technoblade's tale. The people know it, of course, they know of the 'Blood God', it's been spread too far to not know it. But Techno, Techno is just the shy little kid who's always hugging Phil's legs whenever they linger in a shop. They're none the wiser.

Techno needs somewhere to properly grow up, to learn, so Phil decides to live in the town for about two years, Techno growing up, learning. It's a temporary living space, and Phil knows it, because they will need to move one day, for the next kid. Technoblade knows that much, has heard it from Phil before, of how he's not the only kid Phil needs to take care of.

But for those two years, Technoblade stays content, a kid.

Until the voices start.

It's slow, at first, Techno seeming distracted during lessons, trailing off during reading, staring off into space when they're walking around town. Then it's unsettled sleep, waking up to Techno gripping onto Phil with a tight hug, crying quietly.

Technoblade gets jumpy, becomes hesitant, and Phil asks, asks over and over, for Techno to tell, to tell him what's wrong, and Technoblade just stays silent, even when Phil's on his knees, holding onto Techno's hands with worried eyes.

It's a whole two weeks, growing progressively worse, and Techno clings onto Phil, eyes wide in fear, still staring into space, and Phil tries his best to help, tries his best to hug him at night, sing quietly and try and lull the kid to sleep. He's not the best singer, but he knows small songs, here and there. Techno enjoys them, at least, and it helps, just a little.

Technoblade throws himself into reading, inhaling books at an unreasonable pace, and Phil can't seem to tear his eyes away from the words, and he decides to let Techno keep his nose stuck in a book, for it at least calms him down a little, makes him less unhappy.

Then the hunters come, two weeks after the voices do, when Techno is just eight.

Phil's in the bakery, talking with the people at the counter, debating to get maybe a small cake, for Techno, who sits outside, a book in his hands. The bakery is a little loud, with the sound of people shuffling, ovens burning, and so he doesn't notice, right away. He notices too late.

Technoblade reads outside, sitting on the ground, as two new people walk into town, notice him. They're friendly, kind, and one kneels down to Techno to strike up a conversation, grinning brightly.

He pulls Techno's book down, smiling warmly, then sees Techno's blood red eyes, wide, and slightly unhappy that he's been interrupted in his reading.

A knife gets pulled, a book gets dropped, and Technoblade hears one of them mutter 'Blood God'.

His head is too loud, too quick, and he's being grabbed by the shirt, wanting to scream as his head explodes in chants, too many voices to even process, and-

Phil turns as he hears screams, and his heart drops, quickly making his way outside, pushing the door open, grabbing his knife as soon as he sees Techno's book discarded on the ground, and he pauses, stays, lingering in front of the bakery, as screams sound out around them, the townspeople in shock.

"Oh." Phil breaths out, putting his knife back, quickly. "Oh, no."

Techno stands over two bodies, a bloody knife in his hand, tears streaming down his cheeks, and he's shaking so bad, a hand held to his head as he realizes what he's just done.

He turns to Phil, and drop the knife, shaking his head.

"Phil, Phil, I didn't- I didn't mean to- I'm-" Techno stammers, Phil rushing over, kneeling down, wrapping Techno up in his arms. "-they wanted blood, they kept wanting blood, I just wanted it to be quiet, dad, I didn't-"

Phil's heart hurts at the 'dad' stuttered out, and he looks at the damage around, the travelers looking to be killed quickly, cut across the throat. They probably didn't expect Techno to be so fierce. That ended in their demise, starting a fight with something they didn't know of.

"Who asked for blood?" Phil asks quietly, pulling back, keeping his hands on Techno's shoulders. The townspeople are circling around, now, realizing, becoming a threat, but Phil needs to know.

"-I tried to stop, I tried to deny it-" Techno sobs, Phil shushing him, holding a hand to his face.

“Who?” He asks again.

“I was- there’s-” Techno takes a shuddering breath in, hands in Phil’s hair, smearing blood to them. “Voices, in my head. They just weren’t being quiet, and I thought I had *got* it, but those- they- he had a knife, and it got so *loud*- ”

“It’s alright.” Phil reassures, pulling Techno into his arms again, getting to his feet, picking Techno up off the ground. “It’s alright, now.”

Except it isn’t, because there’s two dead bodies on the ground, a bloody knife with them, and the people around them are starting to realize just who the ‘Blood God’ is.

“Phil.” Someone says, reaching a hand out. “Look, your son, he’s not who you-”

“Stay back.” Phil warns, taking a step backwards, Technoblade crying quietly into his neck, holding onto his hair. “I know exactly who he is.”

“You knew this would happen?!” Someone screams, angry, fearful.

“I thought-” *that I could stop it* , Phil thinks, but he doesn’t say it outloud. He can’t stop this. This, already, this is going to spread, going to cause more fear of Techno, is going to make life hell.

He’s going to work with it, Phil decides. Even with the added effort, if there are voices, willing Techno to do this, then he’s going to find a way to quell them.

But the others won’t care for that. No one cares for that. They only make steps towards Phil, carefully, caring, as if Phil didn’t know his son would turn out like this. Phil’s known all along. And he’s not any less loving of the kid in his arms, nor any less protective.

“Listen, Phil.” They say, Phil raising his wings out, glancing around. “Hand him over. I’m so sorry.”

“Stay back.” Phil warns, and he pulls his knife, holding Techno close, holding the blade out in front of him. “Stay back, right now! You’ll end up like them if you touch him!”

There’s glances to the dead bodies on the ground, and Phil, for a second, feels remorse for their deaths, then quickly moves on. They went after a *child*, who was just reading peacefully on the ground. They pulled a knife on him. Phil doesn’t care for that. He knows it’s a bit fucked up, maybe. He doesn’t care.

“Be rational, Phil.” The baker says behind him, and Phil turns around, nearly screams as someone grabs at his arm, grabs for Techno, and he swipes the knife down, cutting into someone’s arm.

“Don’t you *dare* fucking touch him!” Phil steps back, the crowd following. “Leave him alone! You’ll be sorry, otherwise!”

Then he raises his wings out, and flies, before anyone else can make another grab for him. He flies, away from the disaster that was, and holds onto Techno, gritting his teeth as the kid lays silent in his arms.

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They land, hours later, Techno quiet, still, as they land in a field, no one around for miles.

Techno spaces off, and Phil brushes his hair back, carefully puts him down onto the grass. His hands are still covered in blood. It hurts Phil to see it.

“How’s your head, Techno?” Phil asks, kneeling down, and Techno takes a moment to respond, looking up with a distracted air to him.

“...it wasn’t enough.” Techno says quietly, looking near tears again. “They still want blood, they don’t care whose, Phil-”

“Hush.” Phil says gently, and reaches for his knife, pulling it out and trying to give it to Techno. Techno jolts back like Phil’s burnt him.

“NO!” Techno screams, falling back, scooting back as Phil walks towards him. “No, no, I’m not-!”

“You’re not going to hurt me, Techno.” Phil says, and he’s fully sure of that. “I’m not going to make you hurt me.”

Techno stills, Phil reaching a hand out, and Phil pulls him back onto his feet, still flinching when a knife gets put into his hands.

Phil turns him around, points the knife up, as if Techno is about to fight against the wind, and holds his arms around Techno, hands around his, as Techno nervously glances back at him.

“You have voices, right? In your head.” Phil says quietly, by Techno’s shoulder. Technoblade nods.

“They’re loud.” Technoblade admits, and he sounds so miserable, it makes Phil wish he could have helped sooner.

“Then quiet them.”

“They want blood.” Techno says distastefully, grimacing.

“Do you want to give them that?”

Techno answers lighting quick. “No.”

Phil raises the knife in Techno’s hand, points it up at an invisible enemy.

“It’s *your* head. Your mind.” Phil says, calm. “So, quiet them.” And he lets go, Techno taking a deep breath in.

Then Techno lunges, swings, swipes like he’s about to be killed, fighting against nothing, just the wind and air, and he fights in a way Phil didn’t think he’d be able to, with his size.

It goes on for a while, Techno screaming, sometimes, nearly crying.

Then he stops, stills, breathing heavily, staring off into the grass. And he runs to Phil, wrapping his arms around his neck, crying.

Phil finds that the voices become quieter than they have been for the past two weeks.

## Chapter End Notes

this chap is a bit later than planned because my WIFI WENT OUT

but here we are. Hope you liked it :D

# Hiding in plain sight

## Chapter Notes

EYYY its been forever since I updated this geez

forgive me, have this chap

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

They spend the night in the safety of a dark forest, a bed of leaves, but no fire. Phil doesn't want to risk the smoke giving them away. He's wary, and rightfully so.

Technoblade sleeps against him like in the first days of when Phil found him, and he curls up against Phil to hide away from the night cold, Phil keeping him hidden under his wings.

Phil doesn't sleep, but listens to Techno's quiet snores as he stares up into the stars, mind plagued with thought.

Being surrounded by the townspeople like that, the chance of Techno being ripped away from him being too high, it was terrifying. Terrifying in a way Phil doesn't think he's ever felt.

He's been alive for a long time, he's seen a lot. He's nearly died countless times, he's killed countless more. All those moments with his heart racing, him thinking 'is this it?', with wounds bleeding out, it was absolutely nothing compared to the horror of *losing* Technoblade.

Especially when he was so vulnerable. He had been crying, broken, in Phil's arms, and yet the townspeople had looked at Phil like he was given such a burden, having a child that's cursed. Looks of pity. Like Phil had no choice but to give his child up, because how could he keep a *cursed* child?

Curse or not, Phil doesn't care. Prophecy comes true or not, he doesn't *care* .

Fear crawls up his throat and chokes him as he holds Techno tight, and it's not fear over Technoblade becoming exactly what everyone warns of. He should be scared of that, he should be wary. He should be thinking of the greater good. Technoblade shows potential to kill, to hurt and he should be terrified of the possibility of the kid in his arms one day turning against him.

But all he can feel is desperation, and he finds that he'd rather watch the entire world burn, with him in it too, rather than give this child over in his arms.

All he can feel is fear of being ripped away and having no say on if Techno gets to live, and he promises over and over in his head, to the skies, to gods he knows are out there, please, *please* don't let that happen.

But even with all the pleas in the world, Phil knows for a fact that tears and begging aren't a sure way to protect something.

So he makes a different promise.

And he holds Techno close that night, mind thinking of him, and of the other two kids that need just as much help as Techno. And he promises that he will not let the world kill them.

And if the world refuses, and continues to try and hurt them, then Phil will resort to the violence they crave. He doesn't enjoy killing, he would rather pick mercy, rather than go through with having to take a life with his hands.

But he'll easily do it if he has to. If he has to, then he can kill a hundred men. If he has to, he will kill a hundred more.

It's too late to think about the things he will do for his kid, and for the other children to come, and so he holds Technoblade close to his chest, hearing him mumble something, quietly in his

sleep, and tries to think about something else.

His mind wanders to the next child.

The town Phil was in had been bliss, growing and having a nice, calm life for what felt like so long. But even with the growth it gave, and even with the safety it held, fear stabs into Phil's heart, as he wonders if he's too late.

He hasn't heard about the next child for the prophecy. There aren't any priests in that village, there weren't any magic users, any monsters. Travelers would come and go, but never brought tales like that with them.

It was a blessing, at first, having an escape from it, keeping the prophecy away, but now Phil feels like an idiot, because what if he's too *late* ?

He needs to find them. Quickly, soon.

Technoblade still needs to learn how to deal with the voices in his head, with the demand for blood that plagues him, but Phil can multitask. He can help Techno and search, they can learn on the way.

Phil pauses for a second, and wonders when exactly he became so set on becoming a father.

That revelation is somehow more crushing than everything else, and it's not entirely in a bad way, but it makes him feel like crying and being emotional, so he closes his eyes to try and get some rest.

He opens his eyes to daylight, and he wakes up to Techno holding onto his hair, already awake, head resting on Phil's chest as he stares off into the trees, seeming bored but content.

Phil smiles, then quickly sits up, scooping Techno up in his arms and ignoring the shriek of surprise that comes with it, instead just hugging Techno with a grin, pressing a kiss into his hair.

“Wait, what-” Techno stammers out, Phil wrapping his wings around him, drowning him in feathers as he hugs him tight. “Phil- You’re- You’re squishing me.”

“I know.” Phil mumbles, Techno letting out a huff against his shirt. “Good morning.”

“Mmnn.” Techno makes a noise that sounds somewhere in between annoyed and confused. “Why are you *squishing* me?”

“Can’t I just hug my son?” Phil asks lightheartedly, and he can feel Techno freeze, and Phil knows for a fact he’s gone embarrassed with that.

“I guess...” Techno mumbles out, shoving his face into Phil’s shirt.

“Then I will hug you.” Phil nods, leaning back from where he’s sitting. “It’s going to be busy for the next few weeks.”

“Why?”

Phil hesitates, flipping thoughts over in his head, trying to think of a proper way to approach this. Techno knows that he’s hunted, he knows that people want to kill him, because they think he’s dangerous, but he doesn’t know the entire picture. Phil’s told him about being wary, about being careful, but he hasn’t been told about the fact that he’s not the only one.

It hurts Phil a little to know the fact that Techno is perfectly aware as to why that attack happened yesterday, and he knows Techno understands that he’s not like all the other people they’ve ever met.

“Phil?” Techno asks, Phil finding that he’s been quiet for too long, and he lets out a quiet sigh, folding back his wings behind him.

“We need to go find someone.” Phil starts, Techno waiting for him to go on. “You know why you were attacked yesterday, right?”

“Because I’m dangerous?” Techno guesses, not sounding entirely upset over it.

“You are dangerous, I’ll be honest about that.” Phil says, Techno snorting.

“I have voices in my head that demand blood.” He deadpans, and Phil has to blink down at him for a second, as Techno just blinks back with a bored expression. “They’re a lot more quiet now, so I’m going to make fun of them.”

“You do that.” Phil grins, scoffing. “Sounds like a good way to make them stay quiet.”

“It’s better than, well.” Techno falters, gaze drifting off.

“Fighting?”

“I don’t want to do that.”

Phil hums, and he thinks of the knife that stays on his hip. “You can practice with a weapon, if it helps. I could get you a proper one, at the next town. Then you’ll have a way to protect yourself, from any repeats of yesterday, and from the voices as well.”

“I can’t do that.” Techno frowns, shaking his head. “That’s not- I don’t wanna-” He pauses, stares intensely into Phil’s shoulder.

“Why not?”

“Because-” Techno stops again, taking a deep breath in. “Because what if I hurt you?”

Techno looks at him with such worried eyes, bright red and caring, and Phil’s heart squeezes. Techno goes on.

“Back at the town, I wasn’t even thinking, I didn’t know what happened, but he, he grabbed me, and it’s like everything starting *screaming*- ” He shakes his head, gritting his teeth. “And I just wanted it to be quiet, and I just didn’t want to get killed, so-”

“It’s alright.” Phil reminds, Techno blinking quickly, taking deep breaths. “It’s okay.”

“No, it’s not!” Techno yells, Phil raising his eyebrows. “I don’t care about the fact I killed *them* , I couldn’t care less about them, what about you!?”

Phil feels like his air has been taken from his lungs, and he takes a steady intake of air, trying to give an example to Techno of what to follow, deep, calming breaths.

“You’re not going to hurt me.” Phil says carefully, Techno’s face scrunching up in distress.

“You don’t know that!”

“I do.” Phil nods, and he wipes a thumb right under Techno’s eye, Techno huffing as to try not get worked up even more. “I know you don’t want to hurt me. So I know you’ll do everything to assure that it won’t get that bad again.”

Techno lowers his eyes to the necklace around Phil’s neck, usually tucked away under the layers of his clothes, but it sits out in the open now, faintly glowing.

“It was too loud.” Techno mumbles, and Phil wonders how Techno dealt with it, for those weeks. How he tried distracting himself, tried keeping himself busy so he didn’t have to listen to the words in his head, constant and insistent. Phil wishes he could force them to stop. But that’s up to Techno.

“But it’s better now?” Phil asks, Techno nodding. “After you had fought in the field?”

“It’s not blood, but they’ll take it.” Techno mutters, huffing. “They just want fighting.”

“Then we can work with that.” Phil says, Techno making a face. “You can handle a weapon of your own, and I know I’ll still be safe.”

Techno looks to the forest floor, staring at a stray leaf on the ground.

“Do you think you could work with that?” Phil asks, waiting.

Techno doesn’t respond for a moment, seeming to turn the idea over in his head, before settling on a realization, then nodding. “Okay, I can do that.”

Phil blinks at the sudden mood shift, Techno going from hesitant and upset to purely determined. “Okay?”

“Yup.” Techno nods, rolling off of Phil, going to get to his feet.

Phil just looks up at Techno with an amused smile, and shakes his head. “Alright. We better get going.”

“Who are we looking for?” Techno asks, as Phil stands up, stretching his wings out with a yawn. “You said we’re looking for someone...why?”

“You are ‘Technoblade’, the ever so feared blood god...” Phil starts, voice laced with sarcasm, and he then goes to poke Techno in the sides, Techno choking on a squeal, struggling to get away as Phil grins and grabs at him. “Who also likes soft things and gold coins.”

“What about it?” Techno defends, taking several steps away, holding his hands out and getting into a stance, as if ready to run if Phil tries to poke him again.

“You’re the first of three of a certain prophecy.” Phil says, and he hesitates, then goes on. “*That’s* why people are so scared of you, and that’s why they tried killing you yesterday.”

“Everyone wants to kill me because of dumb prophecy?” Technoblade asks, not looking amused. “What prophecy?”

“Hmm.” Phil clasps his hands together, holding them in front of his mouth. “Before you were born, every single priest, magic user, anyone who had a way to know about legends and all that-”

“Legend, like the ender dragon?” Techno asks. “That’s a legend.” He had read about it in the library, before. He’s read everything he could get his hands on, about that. A whole dragon, in the world different from theirs. It was so cool.

“Yes. They all heard about a new story, with some new creatures. Three monster hybrids, meant to grow up and destroy the entire world as we know it.” Phil says quickly trying to put it all in one blow. “You’re the first one out of three.”

Techno stares at him. Blinks.

“Heh?” He only says, and Phil can’t hold back the laugh. “Why would I do that?! That would take so much effort! Sure, my head is all yelling for blood and death, but that doesn’t mean I’m going to kill *everyone* !”

“I know, I know.” Phil snickers, Techno frowning. “But that’s why you have to be careful. And that’s why we need to go searching for the next kid. I’ve been waiting too long, and everyone knows about them. They could be in danger.”

“And what do we do when we find them?”

“Help them.” Phil says easily. “Like I help you.”

Techno seems to think it over, frowning at the ground, but then he nods, slowly. “I guess.”

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They go to move across the land, finding a dirt path and following it, until they hit a new town, bigger, more livelier than the one they’ve been staying at for the past few years. Phil decides to carry Techno as they walk in, and Techno keeps a hood over his head, his face tucked into Phil’s shoulder as he goes down the street.

Phil is confident enough that no one will recognize him by his wings alone, but he knows it’s just a matter of time until people realize he’s the one who’s ran off with Technoblade, so he needs to enjoy the anonymity while he still can. Techno stays hidden in Phil’s arms, and it’s not suspicious, someone holding a sleeping kid in their arms.

There’s people scattered around the street as Phil makes his way through it, hearing passing conversations, a few shop owners yelling out deals, and Techno tightens his grip onto Phil’s collar, huffing.

He’s nervous, and Phil understands. New people, new risks, and he knows Techno doesn’t want a repeat of yesterday, wary of anyone who turns their head to them both.

Phil keeps a steady hand on his back and a friendly smile as he walks, some people giving knowing looks, parents of their own kids. Phil has a feeling they wouldn’t be looking so kind if they knew exactly what type of kid Techno was, though.

Walking past multiple shops, Phil makes his way to a blacksmith, pushing open the door and feeling a wave of heat from inside. He makes a face at the hot air that circles around him, but Techno raises his head with a intrigued look, and there's a stray thought in Phil's mind on if Techno misses the nether from time to time.

Maybe not, he probably would have been too young to really know it past the heat of that realm.

It's mostly empty inside, thankfully, only a couple off to the side, who seem lost in their own world as they talk to each other. The walls are lined with plenty of weapons, swords, axes, knives, but also just normal tools, a storage of pickaxes put to the side, a crate of what might be iron bars or something along those lines tucked in the corner, beside the counter made of stone.

Phil puts Techno down onto the ground, and Techno holds onto his hand, turning his head around to take in the new environment, narrowing his eyes at the people off to the side. He looks up at Phil with almost a frown, and Phil just smiles back.

"It'll be quick." Phil promises, tugging Techno along as he walks over to the counter, making his way around a table in the middle of the room that holds multiple tools on display.

The blacksmith is a smiley young woman, with pitch black hair tied back and a friendly voice that greets Phil as soon as he walks close enough.

"Welcome! I didn't hear the front door ring, gimme a sec!" She calls out, and as Techno leans into Phil's leg, she goes to run off into the backroom, the sound of something clanging and smashing as she curses.

There's a minute of commotion, and she comes back out, circling around the counter, placing her hands onto the stone with a grin.

“Hey! How are you, what do you-” She goes to say, and pauses at the sight of Phil’s wings on his back. Phil takes a deep breath in at the sparkle of awe in her eyes, and nearly jumps when she slams her hands down on the counter again, leaning to the side and trying to get a better look. “Holy fuck, wings! You have wings! I’ve never seen those before, *wow* .”

Phil chuckles, smiling. “Had them my whole life.” He responds, a bit sarcastic.

“Aw, yeah, sorry, that’s probably rude of me, I’m just-” She waves her hands. “Wings! Aw, that’s so cool- moving on, moving on, whaddya need?”

“We’re here for swords, mainly. Just some simple ones, so we can get back on the road with protection.”

“We?” She asks, leaning forward on the counter, and as she does, Techno takes a step back to hide into Phil’s wings.

“Oh fuck, a kid- oh shit, wait- Oh-!” She slaps a hand over her mouth, laughing behind it. “Sorry, I shouldn’t swear in front of a little one. I don’t usually get young kids here, with weapons in the vicinity and all.”

She tries leaning even more over the counter to get a better look at Techno, who keeps himself tucked away behind Phil, just out of sight. “Hey, little guy!”

Techno tugs at the back of Phil’s shirt, not giving a response.

“He’s shy.” Phil offers, and she nods, giving a toothy grin. “He’s not really fond of strangers, sorry.”

“No, no, makes sense, he’ll grow out of his shell, don’t worry about it.” She reassures Phil, leaning back. “Just don’t go letting him repeat what I say, I say stupid shit all the time.” She winces. “I’m not the best with kids.”

“It’s alright.” Phil snickers.

“Eh, I’ll just give you a discount as a apology for swearin’ in front of your kid. What are you here for again? Swords? You want a custom made one, place an order?”

Phil thinks, turning her question over in his head as he looks across the walls, at the amount of plain swords hanging up, leaning against the wall.

“I’ll need one, but what I’m really concerned with is his.” He points a finger behind him, to Techno.

“A sword for the little one? Really now?” She raises her eyebrows, trying to get a good look on Techno again, only for Techno to stay in Phil’s wings. “I mean, then again, with proper guidance, a little bit of fighting never hurt anybody, well, it does hurt, actually, it’s fighting-okay, I need to ask, are you sure?”

Phil holds back a snort. “I thought it would be nice for him to learn, so he can use it as a hobby and for defence when he grows up.”

“Yeah, that makes sense, alright. I’m not judging your parenting skills, you probably know your kid.” She shrugs, walking around the counter, making her way to the wall of swords. “I’m not sure if I got a small enough one for him, I got all of these- you can pick one out, by the way, go ahead, browse- although, he’s not going to be able to carry these comfortably, hm-”

She looks up and down the wall, scanning the different blades as Phil slowly walks over to look through the weapons like she suggested, Techno grabbing his hand again. He leans into Phil’s side, eyes looking curiously at all the metal woven into sharp blades in front of him.

“What do you think, Tech?” Phil murmurs, Techno turning his head up as he looks to the swords placed higher up. “Anything that looks good enough for me to use?”

Techno glances up to Phil's face for a moment, before looking back at the wall, tilting his head as he seems to actually look for one.

"I'm going to check the back, give me a sec!" The blacksmith calls out, jogging over to the backroom for something that would suit Technoblade.

As she's busy, Techno tugs Phil to the side, searching for the perfect sword, and Phil just waits patiently. He could probably use any of these, to be honest, save for the heavy ones, but he wants to see what Techno will pick.

After a moment, he seems to find it, and he points a finger at one that sits just out of his reach, and Phil looks at it, then laughs, going to take it off the wall.

"This one?" Phil asks, holding it in his hand, a simple sword with a gold hilt, a tiny emerald in the center of it. "Don't tell me you picked this just cause it's golden."

Techno has the decency to look a bit sheepish, tugging at Phil's hand. "No."

"No?"

"The, uh...green matches your shirt." Techno nods, Phil snickering.

"The emerald, mate?" Phil asks, and points the tip of the sword into the ground so Techno can get a look.

"Yeah." Techno agrees, poking at the gem, then raising his eyes up to Phil again with an expectant face.

Phil shrugs, smiling. "Sure. It's a good choice." Techno beams.

“I’m back!” Phil hears, turning his head to the woman again, and she holds three different swords in her arms, kneeling down to the ground in front of Techno and laying them out. “I got some choices, here, look.”

Techno takes a step back into Phil, hands grasping onto the end of his shirt, and he gives a nudge to Techno for him to go ahead and pick. Techno glances up at him, before looking back down, eyes observing the smaller swords in front of him. They’re a bit thinner, lighter, no doubt, and it might still take a bit for Techno to get used to them, but they seem good.

“Made these a little while back, they’ve been collecting dust, I won’t lie, I forgot about them in the corner of the workbench. But go ahead, pick one out, little one, whichever you think is best.” The blacksmith grins, leaning back on her knees, holding her palms out.

Technoblade just stares at them, tugging at Phil’s shirt again.

“You pick.” He says quietly, Phil barely catching it.

“It’s your sword, mate.” Phil nudges him in the shoulder to go on.

“I picked yours, you pick mine.” Techno insists, narrowing his eyes up at Phil, and Phil gives a long, fond sigh.

“Alright, alright.” He looks down to the swords on the ground, taking less than a minute to really make a choice. “Grab the middle one.”

Techno picks it up, giving a wary glance to the blacksmith who sits not too far, taking a step back at Phil’s side as quick as he can, before holding it up and looking at it.

“It might still be a little heavy, sorry for that, but you’ll get strong, won’t you?” The blacksmith asks, leaning forward with a smile, and Techno goes to hide into Phil’s wings

again, only for Phil to take a step to the side, Techno giving an absolute betrayed face.

“Is it good?” Phil asks, Techno holding the sword upside down, the handle to his chest as he frowns at Phil for stepping away.

“Mhm.” He only gives as an answer, then actually nods.

“Chatty, aren’t you?” The blacksmith asks, Techno keeping his head down on his boots, like they’re the most interesting thing in the world. “Don’t worry, little one, you’ll grow into it.”

“How much?” Phil asks for the price, taking the sword from Techno as Techno goes to stand behind him, hands grabbing at his feathers.

“How much you got?” She responds, raising her eyebrows, only to laugh. “I’m kidding. Ten gold sound like a fair trade?”

Phil reaches into his pocket to hand over the change and as he does, Techno pokes his head out, hand swiping out at Phil’s sleeve.

“Can I have one?” He whispers, Phil turning his head to him with a smile.

“Will I get it back?” Phil asks, Techno making a face, before nodding. “Alright.” And he gives a coin over to Techno, who holds it to his chest, looking happy.

A few minutes later, they’re off, new weapons at their sides, and a general pleasant interaction. Phil walks down the street to go to the church that he can see from here, tall and made of stone. There’s bound to be information there from the priest, over the next kid, and Phil tries to keep the nervous feeling in his chest down at whatever he might hear.

Techno walks at his side, holding onto Phil’s hand with one hand, and holding his gold coin with the other, eyes glancing up carefully as he looks around the street.

Phil notes that Techno is going to be seeing quite a lot, for at least the next few months, with them having to stay traveling for the next two kids, and for safety. It could get dangerous, being on the run, and Phil promises to help Techno learn how to use that sword that stays on his hip.

There's a bell that rings at the top of the church, over and over, loud and chiming, and Phil raises his head to it, humming under his breath. He wonders what time it is, how much time he has until news of yesterday reaches this town, and then the next, and the next, until Phil makes a name for himself. Techno is recognizable, he knows that, but Phil, not so much. But with his wings, and with the incident from those hunters, Phil knows his face will be well known soon.

They walk up to the church, Phil aiming to get to the wooden doors, but he's stopped as Techno pauses in his steps, his hand almost slipping out of Phil's.

Phil turns around, hearing the clink of a coin falling, and he sees the gleam of gold at Techno's feet, Techno paying no mind to it.

"Tech?" Phil asks, his eyesight following Techno's, to the wall of the church, where there are a few flyers put up, hanging and occasionally fluttering with the winds, their words out for anyone to see.

Phil's heart drops as he realizes what Techno is looking at.

"Is that who we're looking for?" Techno asks, quietly, as he stares at a wanted poster, a messy drawing of something not quite human on it, something deadly, the features over-dramatic and scary. Phil knows right away there's no possible way that's how they actually look. It's too artificial, too warped under the influence of someone's fear.

*'SECOND MONSTER DESTINED TO CAUSE APOCALYPSE'* it says in big, bold letters at the top, Phil feeling like the words are getting burned into his heart as he squeezes Techno's hand in a way he hopes is comforting. *'WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE'*.

## Chapter End Notes

Fun fact! The reason Technoblade was suddenly set on having a sword was because his thought process was more or less "Well if I'm not going to hurt Phil, like he says, than I'm going to PROTECT HIM!" good for him

Also I wasss going to try and finally get Wilbur in this chap, but I just couldn't, plot got too long :( He oughta show up in the next one though. For this one, you get a vague mention of him on a wanted poster :P (He's fine don't worry)

Thanks for reading! Hope you liked it

# Boy in the river

## Chapter Notes

IM TIRED!!!!

but I'm so hyped hope yall like this :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Phil falters in place for a second as he can only stare at the paper, a tight feeling winding up in the back of his throat, words gone. Techno turns his head to where he dropped his coin earlier, and it lays a few feet away, having rolled off on the street. He doesn't go to pick it up, and instead looks back up at Phil, whose eyes are wide and stuck on the wall.

Techno squeezes his hand, and Phil blinks, trying to not let his breathing get too quick. He glances down to Technoblade, who blinks back up, face blank. Phil doesn't know what he must be thinking, and he's not sure if he should be comforting him or not.

He goes to walk up to the wall of the church instead, tugging Techno along. Reaching a hand up to the flyer, he holds onto the edge of it tightly with two fingers, reading over it, eyes narrowing at the description, the number offered if the monster is caught. It's high, and Phil's never been one for being rich, he doesn't crave that sort of power, but even then, he knows that the number there, the gold offered, it's one hell of a motivation.

*'Has the appearance of a small boy,' it describes, something tugging sharply in Phil's heart. 'Blue scales on its face, fins for ears. Dark grey eyes, brown hair. Do not attempt talking with it, kill or capture on sight.'*

The description is simple enough, and the warning only makes Phil narrow his eyes even more, his mouth turned into a deep frown. A small boy, not the appearance of a small boy, he *is* a small boy. A *child*.

This flyer makes it out as if this boy is an uncontrollable danger, but Phil knows for a fact that if any deaths were the cause of this boy, it would be out of self defense. His mind wanders to Techno's first kills, those two travelers.

That had been unlucky on it's own, but the thought of this kid being hunted, on the run as he stands here, it's too painful to dwell on. Guilt pours down his shoulders, too cold, and he swallows down slight panic, instead just yanking at the flyer and ripping it off the wall. It may not help all that much, but the less people who see it, the better.

Techno tugs at his hand, his curious face looking up at Phil, and his eyes flick to the paper in Phil's hand, almost silently asking if he can see.

For a second, Phil wants to refuse. For a split second, he feels as if he can hide it away and not let Techno truly realize how many people out there can hurt them both, kill them both. To not let him realize how unsafe he really is, being so small.

But Techno reaches his hand out towards the paper anyway, even with Phil's hesitance, and the expression on his face spells determination, something like slight anger flashing across for a moment. Phil knows that Techno would be more upset over not being told, rather than knowing.

Kneeling down to Techno's level, Phil lets go of his hand, and gives the flyer over, Techno grasping it with two hands, reading over the words, staring at the drawing of what is supposed to be a boy just like him.

Well, not just like him. But similar, in the way that they're both meant to be hunted, in some sort of way.

The paper crinkles in his grip, and Techno's eyes are wide for a moment, stuck on the flyer in his hands.

"This is who we're looking for?" He asks, very quietly, just under his breath.

“I’m sure that’s not what he actually looks like.” Phil reassures, tugging at Techno’s shirt, fixing the way it’s tucked. “It’s probably inaccurate.”

“They’re offering money for his head.” Techno says, like he can’t quite wrap his head around it.

Phil holds back a sigh, letting Techno process it slowly, as he makes plans in his head. He needs to find the location of this kid, as fast as possible, then work to be able to bring him along with him. No doubt that if there’s already a flyer out for him, with warnings and all, then the kid will be distrustful. Phil quietly hopes that he might be nearby, so that Phil can hopefully get there in time.

He’s already too late, by too much. But better late than never arriving at all.

“How old is he?” Techno asks, raising his eyes from the paper, Phil slightly thrown off by his question. “How old do you think he is?”

“I…” Phil trails off, both not sure on how to respond and not sure if he really wants to think about it. He got to Techno when he was young, in time before any harm came to him, and he’s glad for that. But if this kid is as old as Techno, and Phil’s this late- “I don’t know.”

Techno’s eyes fall back onto the paper. Phil doesn't know how to describe his expression, something between confused, annoyed, and slightly fearful. He doesn’t know if it’s a good reaction or not.

The paper crinkles even more in his grip, and Phil doesn’t say anything when the flyer gets crushed into a ball in Techno’s hands, Techno frowning and holding it to his chest.

Phil holds his hand out for the paper so he could throw it away, burn it later maybe, just for the satisfaction, but Techno shakes his head, instead just grabbing onto Phil’s hand, eyes expectant.

The paper stays crumpled in Techno's grip, and Phil just stands to his feet again, pulling Techno along for the two of them to enter the church. Techno sticks to his side as Phil pushes open the wooden doors, the doors creaking quietly as they go in.

It's mostly empty, the place quiet save for a few hushed conversations from people scattered around, townspeople either there for their own prayers, or waiting for a blessing from the priest himself.

Phil doesn't go to sit down like the others, instead he walks right through with a slight rush to his steps, ignoring the glances he gets, eyes on him, on his wings, on Techno. He holds Techno's hand just a little tighter.

The priest that Phil is looking for sits at the front of the church, dressed in dark purple robes, hair curly and dark brown. They're writing in a small journal, maybe a diary or something along those lines. Phil would be curious, but he has bigger things on his mind.

"Excuse me?" Phil asks, pausing right beside where he sits. The priest raises their head from the journal, and as they do, Techno leans against Phil's leg, face turned to the floor. "Are you the priest here?"

They blink for a moment, closing the small book in their hands, putting it to the side. Their eyes trail to Phil's wings for a moment, glance down at Techno huddled close to Phil, and for a split second, Phil considers throwing his patience out the window and just using the newly acquired sword at his hip to get past the whole awkward meeting stage.

But the moment moves on quick enough, and Phil takes a small step back as they stand up from their seat.

"I am. What brings you here?" They ask, and Phil's grateful that he gets straight to the point.

"I, uhm." Phil falters, trying to think of how to phrase this in such a way that will make sense. "I had a few questions, I wanted to ask."

He tilts his head, waiting for Phil to go on.

“There was a flyer outside, on the wall. It was asking for the ‘second monster’ of...” Phil trails off, his words faltering.

“Oh.” They blink, looking conflicted for a moment before his expression calms into something more reassuring. “The apocalypse.”

Phil smiles, even if he probably shouldn’t be smiling at the idea of complete and utter destruction of the world they know. “Yes. Do you- The second one, he hasn’t been found?”

The priest thinks for a moment, humming. “Well, no one’s kept him captured, that I know of. He’s still on the run.”

*On the run*, Phil’s head repeats, and he hates the bitter taste that leaves in his mouth. This kid has been captured before, and has escaped, only to continue running, and the thought of that makes something protective rise up in his chest. He becomes a little more aware of Techno’s presence by his side.

“Do you know where he is?” Phil questions, and he tries to keep his tone calm, but there’s still a slight hint of desperation in his words, and he can see the way the priest’s face shifts at hearing it.

He doesn’t respond for a few seconds, looking almost confused. “Are you searching for him?” He asks, Phil nodding. “Well... there’s plenty of people looking for him already. You don’t have to worry, he’ll be found before anything terrible happens, if that’s the problem-”

“No, that’s not-” Phil cuts them off, waving a hand. “ *I* need to find him.”

The priest looks down at Techno again for a second, clasping his hands together. They look at Phil with a thoughtful expression, something like realization settling on their features, and they smile. “For what reason?” He asks, quietly.

“To stop the apocalypse.” Phil responds, shrugging with one shoulder. “What else?”

“Plenty of hunters have come here asking the same, I hope you know. To stop the apocalypse. Are you planning on hunting the second monster as well?”

“No.” Phil answers without hesitation. “I’m, I’m just searching for him, so I can...prevent any world-ending events.”

“So you can take another unfortunate child under your wing for protection? Isn’t that what you’re doing?” They say, raising their eyebrows. Phil doesn’t get to respond before they continue again, tilting their head down to Techno with a friendly smile. “Like this one. Technoblade.”

Phil freezes, and Techno looks up from the floor in shock, before taking a step back to stand behind Phil, trying to hide in the feathers of his wings. Phil’s hand jumps to the sword at his side.

“Oh, no, no, I don’t mean any harm-” The priest immediately says, holding his hands out in a calming manner, bright gold eyes staring wide at Phil. “I just-

His words fall flat at Phil’s glare, and he lowers his hands, looking nervous. Glancing to the people still in the church, who haven’t overheard their quiet conversation, he gives another shaky smile, nodding to a room by the side of the church.

“Look, we can talk more where someone might not overhear.”

“And how do I know I can trust you?” Phil demands, wary. Each time Techno’s been recognized, people assume the worst, jump to their conclusions. Phil doesn’t want it to repeat again, and he doesn’t want to dirty his sword just after he’s gotten it, but he will if he needs to.

“I wouldn’t sell you out.” They say, almost scandalized at the prospect, and Phil just gives an unimpressed look. “I swear you have my word.” He tries instead. Phil only looks slightly convinced, making a face. Techno peeks out from around Phil’s legs, making a face as well.

They stammer for a second, trying to think of a way to let Phil know they really do mean no harm. He looks at Techno, and him and Techno lock eyes, Techno frowning deeply and squinting, as if he’s trying to be intimidating. He just looks upset, if anything.

“I’ve seen the second child, before.” He says, still looking at Techno, and Techno’s face falls, Phil looking surprised as well, searching for any hint of a lie as the priest looks back up at Phil. “And I know he’s not what everyone makes him out to be. He, he doesn’t deserve to be killed.”

The words hang in the air for a moment, Phil considering his choices here. He can faintly hear the crinkle of the paper still in Techno’s hands.

“Okay.” Phil agrees, finally taking his hand off the grip of his sword, but only so he can lean down and pick Technoblade up off the ground, holding him to his chest. He carries Techno with one hand, and keeps a resting hand on his weapon with the other. “Alright.”

“Alright.” The priest repeats, and walks along, gesturing for Phil to follow.

Their footsteps are quiet as they make their way to the corner of the church, the priest pushing open a wooden door, which leads to a small room, half taken up by stairs that lead higher up into the church. There’s boxes and barrels for storage scattered around, a light layer of dust on them, and Phil doesn’t exactly feel secure when the door closes quietly behind him with a creak.

“I’m sorry if it’s a little cramped in here, but it’s better than someone overhearing and recognizing that child.”

“It’s alright.” Phil mutters, even though he is uncomfortable with how small the room is. The stairs offer comfort, at least, as a way out. “You’ve seen the second child, you said?”

“Once, in passing.” The priest answers, nodding. “He came for a place to sleep, and he was gone before I could offer him somewhere to go.”

A small boy slipping through the doors in the middle of the night, clothes dirty, hair in his face. His feet had been scraped and covered with dried mud, no shoes on to protect them. He had curled up on one of the long benches with a blanket that was offered, and by the time the priest had realized that the prophecy had described a siren hybrid as one of the three, it was too late, and sunrise just barely came up, the kid long gone. He had taken the blanket with him.

“I didn’t realize...” They trail off, Phil tilting his head. “I thought, when the prophecy, the visions, all the talk that went around, when it said there would be three monster children, they would be more...monstrous.”

“More easy to kill, you mean?” Phil asks, the priest sputtering as they try to disagree.

“No, no, I just-”

“They’re just kids. Although many don’t seem to see it that way.”

“People’s perceptions can be warped easily with enough words.” The priest says, Phil humming. “Like with him.” He points to Techno in Phil’s arms.

“From the rumors I’ve heard, the ‘Blood God’ is a ruthless danger to anyone who lives. Something that could kill in a blink of an eye.”

Techno huffs, wrapping his arms around Phil’s neck.

“He’s definitely dangerous, they’re right about that.” Phil agrees, the priest looking marginally surprised. “He can kill. But it’s not like he wants to.”

“What child would?” They ask, and Phil’s mind jumps to that incident in town once again, Techno with blood on his hands, two dead bodies under him-

“One that’s backed into a corner.” Phil answers. “What else have you heard about Techno?”

“Well, from what’s come around, many think he’s dead.” That’s a relief, and Phil lets the smallest amount of stress fall off his shoulders. “There were a few sightings, some fake, maybe a few true...” Phil shrugs. “But after nothing came up, people assumed he must’ve been killed by someone who didn’t spread the news.”

Phil nods, grimacing a little. After what happened earlier, there’s no doubt that panic will rise up again, as word travels that Techno is perfectly alive, having killed two men, and being accompanied by Phil, who will no doubt stick out with the wings on his back. There goes their element of blending in.

“And the second child?” Phil asks.

“I’m afraid that even with what little magic I hold, I can’t give you the exact location, but I can tell you where he was last captured, and where hunters are looking. I’m often kept up with it, since so many come to ask me about the prophecy and information over him.”

Phil stares, blinking, a torn expression on his face. “He’s been captured before?” Techno tugs at the collar of his shirt, and Phil rubs a hand onto his back.

“Multiple times.” The priest nods, looking pained, because there isn’t an easy way to go saying this. “No one’s entirely sure how he keeps escaping, but no ones been able to pin him down long enough. I don’t know how many times he’s escaped.”

“Oh.” Phil breaths out, and he holds Techno tight in his arms.

God, no. He was late. Phil had promised to try and protect these kids and he's already partially failed one. He knows it won't be easy to find and help this one, no doubt his trust will be broken from being on the run, but Phil knows he will find a way to get this kid to come with him, so he doesn't have to be doing this on his own anymore.

But either way, Phil can't stop the feeling of guilt and panic creeping up his throat, and he stares into the wooden floor as he tries to blink away tears threatening to well up and spill out. What if he's too late? What if, as they speak right now, the kid is getting cornered again, with luck not on his side? Phil can't do anything, hasn't done anything, and it *kills* him-

A small hand smacks into his face, the culprit being Techno, who hits Phil gently (somewhat gently) with a palm against his nose. He holds it there for a moment, Phil blinking at Techno in slight confusion, and Techno blinks back, before smacking him again.

"Wha- Technoblade." Phil huffs, grinning and reaching up to pull Techno's hand off, lightly holding onto the kid's wrist. Techno gives an almost smug smile, and Phil responds by tugging at Techno's hand and blowing a raspberry against his palm.

Techno jerks his hand back with a squeal, and he holds it to his chest, narrowing his eyes at Phil with a frown. Phil only snickers.

Turning his attention back to the priest, who smiles at the sight before him, Phil watches as they go to search through the storage in the room, rummaging around in a chest for a moment before walking to Phil and holding out a map.

"Here." He says, Phil taking it from his hand, letting Techno help him unfold it and hold it up for the two of them to see. "There should be a town called Ascot, further down." They say, as Techno and Phil scan over the map. Techno curiously takes the information in, Phil spots the town easily enough. "That's where I last heard of him, of a sighting there."

"It's not much, but I hope that you'll be able to find him." The priest nods, Phil glancing up from the map, as Techno tries to fold it again, somewhat succeeding.

“Thank you.” Phil says, meaning it with all his heart. “It’s enough, I-” He pauses, and Techno goes still as well, as the sound of the front doors slamming open sounds out. The priest looks to the door with wide eyes.

“Everyone out!” Someone yells, Phil’s heart dropping. “There is a dangerous individual in the building, for your safety, everyone out!”

He turns to the priest, who looks just as panicked, raising his hands up. “I didn’t sell you out!” They say, quickly walking to the door. “Stay here, you’ll be fine.”

“They’re here for me, how am I going to be fine?!” Phil whispers, taking a few steps back, the priest waving a hand, and the door shuts behind them.

Phil takes a deep breath in, looking to the stairs, and he takes the map from Techno’s hands, tucking it away, and going up the steps, hoping it’ll lead somewhere where he can see something.

It leads to some kind of balcony up above, by the sides of the church, and Phil kneels down by the railing, having a full view of what happens below him. He can see multiple people scattered by the front doors, weapons in hand, and light armor.

“Who’s that?” Techno asks, voice barely a whisper, holding on tightly to Phil as he looks down as well.

“I don’t know.” Phil answers truthfully, listening in on the conversation happening below.

Phil’s thankful to see the priest standing his ground, the hunters seeming to be hesitant with coming more into the church with how they cross their arms with a stern look.

“-I understand, I apologize for barging in, but for your safety-”

“This is a church! A sacred place, you can’t just come in here with weapons, yelling for people to leave-”

“Of course, but-”

“-do you have any idea how rude that is-?” The priest insists, tilting his head at the man in front of him, who wears golden armor and holds an iron sword in his hand.

“Listen.” He insists, holding a hand up. “We’ve heard reports of a man coming in here, who’s connected to an incident that happened not that long ago in a village nearby.”

Phil huffs, wincing at the loss of being unknown. Word has traveled that fast? Well, it makes sense, with people thinking Technoblade was dead, only for him to pop back up with new blood on his hands.

“That doesn’t mean you can just drag him out by force.” The priest says, frowning, giving a look to the other hunters scattered around, who all take a few steps towards the front door, as to not intrude more than they already have.

The man in front of him looks slightly frustrated. “Do you even know what he’s protecting? He has-”

“The church is not a place for violence-”

“Surely there can be an exception, when he holds something that could kill us all!”

The priest levels him with a look, as if his patience has worn thin. The hunter goes quiet, and a few people even look to the ground in shame.

“This church is a sacred place that offers sanctuary to those who need it. Anyone within these walls is protected by that rule. You absolutely cannot force them out.”

“So he is here?” The man asks, getting narrowed eyes in response. “Sorry. Please, just hear us out-”

“If you really are insistent on catching the person you’re looking for, you may wait outside until he leaves, and you can meet him then. But you can not go searching around and disrupting the peace of my church.” The priest says, clasping his hands together in front of him, and for a second, his eyes are just a little too bright. “I will ask one more time. Leave.”

Phil watches as there’s some hesitance from the people to exit the church, but with the way the priest holds no room for argument in their expression, they leave eventually, and Phil can hear talk of guarding the exits of the church as the front doors close.

Waiting a few seconds to really make sure they’re gone, Phil stands up, looking over the railing, the priest looking up at Phil with a sympathetic face.

“I’m not sure how long they’ll be guarding the exits, but you both can stay for as long as you need to.” They say, walking through the now empty seats of the church. “I was telling the truth of offering sanctuary. You are safe here.”

“I appreciate it.” Phil answers, his words nearly echoing out across the empty church. “But we can’t stay.” There’s still the second kid, and with each minute passing, it’s another minute where that kid could be in danger.

They nod at Phil with a conflicted look. “Then how will you leave?”

Phil walks along the pathway to another set of stairs at the end, ones that go up even higher, no doubt to the top of the church, perhaps. “I’ve got wings, mate.” Phil grins.

---

Phil flies from the roof of the church, amused at the looks he gets when people spot him getting away, and the yelling of people realizing he has an advantage over them, with being able to soar through the air.

Him and Techno fly away from the small town, not noticing the way the priest opens his doors once again, regretfully informing that oh, no, Phil has gotten away, there he goes. Phil isn't around to watch as the blacksmith that he had talked to earlier, the woman who had been so kind and friendly, punches a hunter across the face when one of them raises their voice at the priest for not keeping Phil in the building.

No, instead, he and Techno fly out over the trees, Phil making sure to get a good distance between him and the town before landing on the ground to check the map once more. The town they need to go to is far, but not too far. It'll take two weeks tops for Phil to fly them over there.

Techno kicks his boot into the dirt under him as Phil looks over the map, and he makes an unhappy noise, realizing something.

"What's wrong, mate?" Phil asks, looking down to see Techno slump against him, huffing.

"I dropped my coin." Techno supplies, and Phil can't help but laugh, even when Techno gives him a frown.

---

They fly at night, then either rest or walk during the day. Phil doesn't want to risk being spotted in the sky while he makes his way to the town, so traveling under the protection of the night is the best way to go.

Techno mostly sleeps in Phil's arms while it's night, and when Phil lands down at sunrise, he sleeps with Techno, who rests in his arms still, the two of them sleeping far into the morning.

They wake up in the middle of a grassy field, tall grass that reaches up to Techno's waist all around them.

Phil takes the chance to finally use the swords they have, and Techno practically leaps at the opportunity to finally learn how to use it, holding it with a determined look on his face.

However, Phil doesn't get to teach anything in the first ten minutes or so, because Techno insists that his head is getting too loud, so he spends the time cutting away at the grass around him, swiping through and chopping away with a sense of slight aggression.

Phil just watches with a fond look, arms crossed. Techno cuts out a whole path in the grass, seeming to not care if it'll seem weird from above, but more focused on just cutting through something, satisfying the urge for some kind of violence.

"Hey." Phil says, after a few minutes of Techno focused on his work. Techno raises his chin, but he doesn't quite look away from the grass, still cutting across again. "About your voices."

Techno pauses, holding the sword out in front of him. He turns his head to Phil. "What about them?"

"This helps, right?"

"Yeah." Techno shrugs, cutting down another piece of grass. "They just kinda want something exciting. And, actually- When they're not all loud, and overlapping, they say a lot of annoying things."

"Really?"

"*Cutting grass is boring.*" Techno says, in a mocking voice. "*Why grass?* Because I'm not cutting anything else, this is all I got." He mutters under his breath.

Phil huffs, shaking his head. “Hey.”

Techno looks at him, face bored.

“What are they saying now?” Phil asks, and Techno blinks.

He stares at Phil for a long minute, and Phil thinks he might not respond at all, when he mumbles out. “Just stuff.” And goes back to attacking the grass.

Techno’s head fills with silly words, *dad, dadza, we got to protect him*, and he shoves it down, tells the voices to shush, and cuts at the grass.

---

The time passes by slowly, their routine going well. They either fly, walk, rest, or practice sparring, and Phil knows exactly which one Techno enjoys the most.

They’re a week into their travel, Techno knowing how to hold a sword better, and Phil being just a bit more relieved at the progress they make. From getting closer to the town, and from Techno learning how to defend himself.

It’s daylight, when they’re walking along a dirt path, Phil and Techno side by side as they make their way to their destination. The town should be just a few days more away, and once they get there, Phil is sure he can find a way to get some sort of information out of someone, to try and find the next kid.

As they walk along, Phil is lost in his thoughts enough to where he almost doesn’t hear the crinkling of paper in Techno's hands. When he looks to his side, he finds nothing, and Phil stops in his tracks, turning around.

Techno's stopped walking too, and he holds the flyer from earlier, from the church. He stares at the picture of what is supposed to be Wilbur, expression blank, and Phil frowns. He had hoped that Techno dropped that sometime during their traveling, but he still had it tucked away in his pocket, apparently.

"Tech?" Phil asks, and the paper crumples in Techno's grip, his hands holding it too tight. "Techno."

His face has shifted into something upset, and Phil quickly walks over, aiming to gently take the flyer away, offer words of comfort, maybe have them rest here for a while. He ends up stopping in his tracks at Techno's words, though.

"This isn't fair." Techno mumbles out, Phil just barely hearing it.

It feels like his heart has dropped, with the tone in Techno's voice, quiet and almost sorrowful.

"What?" Phil is only able to say, his words failing him.

"This isn't. Fair." Techno repeats, much more stressed. He frowns at the paper in his hands. "This- they're offering a lot of money for his head. For people to kill him, or, put him in a cage, probably-"

"Techno-" Phil clears his throat, holding out his hand. "Give me the flyer-"

"No." Techno refuses, raising his head. "You said this is the second kid. He's like me, right?"

"Technoblade-" Phil swallows, Techno's eyes staring at him, and for once they feel like they're holding too many questions.

“Could this have been me?” Techno asks, and Phil sets his jaw to try and stave off the way his heart hurts at those words. “I keep looking at this, when you’re sleeping, and you said he’s the second kid, there’s three of us, so he’s like me.”

“He is.” Phil answers carefully.

“And, and so, if there’s this paper, for him, people wanting him to die and paying money for it, then there’s one for me too, isn’t there?”

“I-” Phil falters, sighing. “Yes. Probably.”

“Is there one for you.” Techno says, and he says it like that’s a concept that’s worse than his own life being in danger, his face holding the slightest bit of anger.

Phil almost doesn’t want to answer, but his hesitation is answer enough. Techno’s face shifts into something not quite shocked, but a mix of disgust and anger, young frustration.

“That’s-” Techno cuts himself, looking down at the flyer again, and he tears it into pieces. “That’s not fair! That’s stupid, that’s not fair!”

“Technoblade-”

Techno ignores him, ripping apart the paper into shreds in his hands. “No! That’s- No, why would they do that!?” Techno yells, letting the pieces of paper fall onto the dirt, then dragging his shoe over it, pressing it into the ground. “That’s not fair, why do they want to hurt you?!”

“Because I have you.” Phil answers quietly, watching as Techno gets riled up, slamming his foot into the ground.

“And why do they want to kill me?! Or him!” He points at the ripped up paper on the ground.  
“Why would they want to-”

“It’s-” Phil waves his hands, kneeling down in front of Techno. “It’s not easy to explain, Tech. There’s bad people in the world, and good ones-”

“ *One* good one.” Techno stresses, jabbing Phil in the chest.

Phil ignores the swell of emotion he feels in his heart at hearing that. “And it is unfair, you are right. It’s not fair at all, but they’re scared-”

“ *They’re* scared?” Techno repeats, almost scoffing.

“Yes, and fear makes people do stupid things, sometimes even drastic things-”

“I’m scared too!” Techno insists, hitting his hands against Phil. “I’m scared of getting killed!” He hits against his shirt again. “I’m scared of *you* getting killed!”

Phil takes a sharp breath in, holding onto Techno’s hands gently. “Techno.”

“And *he’s* probably scared too!” Techno points to the paper again, then continues, shaking his head. “They’re *scared* , scared of what? Me killing them? They’re trying to kill me first!”

“I know-”

“That’s dumb!”

“You have a right to be angry about it, it *is* dumb.” Phil smiles, Techno frowning. “But-” Phil pauses.

Techno pauses too, going still, the two of them listening out to the trees around them.

There's the sound of people, and horses.

"Phil?" Techno says quietly, looking past Phil, squinting down the path.

Phil stands up, turning around, looking as well.

He sees a group of people on horse emerge from the trees, making their way down the path, weapons in hand, yelling out to each other. One of them hold a crossbow, another a sword, an axe-

"Phil-" Techno says again, more panicked, and Phil sweeps Techno off his feet and goes running off the path, into the trees.

He hears the sound of people following, and there's more yelling, branches and bushes getting pushed to the side as Phil runs, Techno holding on tightly, looking over Phil's shoulder.

"There's people running after us, they're-" Techno says, gasping when an arrow comes flying through the air. It doesn't land that close to them, but it's enough to scare them, and Phil runs even faster. "Phil!"

The trees overhead are in his way to fly, the branches blocking his way out. Phil runs up a hill, seeing that the trees let up into a clearing ahead, thankfully, to what looks like a river.

"It's alright, there's a clearing ahead, we can get away there." Phil reassures, Techno holding on with a death grip as Phil makes his way over roots and plants.

He's not too sure if the people behind him are hunters or not, but it doesn't really matter, because as he sprints, he's able to get to the clearing, his wings spreading out almost as soon as there is space for it, and just as he's about to fly off over the river to get away, Techno tugs at the collar of his shirt.

"Phil." Techno breathes out, and the way he says it makes Phil pause, looking down from the sky to see-

A boy looking to be Techno's age standing in the river, staring back at them with wide, grey eyes, blue scales scattered at the sides of his face.

Phil seems to lose his breath right there, as Wilbur stares at them both.

## Chapter End Notes

I gotta say, school has been beating me up, but my best friend caught the cold yesterday (ha, dork (hi mari, I know u see this)) so I threw most of my responsibilities out the window and crafted this up just for her! It is 2:30 am and I am VERY satisfied with how this turned out.

also Wilbur! fish boy. (Also eyyy priest with he/they pronouns brrrr)

Thanks for reading!

# Fish kid

## Chapter Notes

this chapter had no business being so hard to finish

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Phil-” Techno hits a hand against his shoulder, eyes wide. “That’s- from the poster-” He whispers, and Phil can only nod numbly, his throat feeling tight.

Fins for ears, blues scales scattered on the side of his face, like that poster had said. Appearance of a small boy, it had described.

Phil will agree with that part, because that’s what he’s seeing. The kid is just standing in the middle of the river, the water rushing past his shins as he stares at Phil with a shocked expression, blinking slowly.

He looks lost, almost. Phil wonders if he was walking through the river as a way to move without leaving tracks.

There’s hair all up in his face, wavy brown mostly covering his eyes in a way that makes Phil want to brush it back just so it’s not blocking his vision. Phil’s slightly surprised to see it’s not terribly unkept. It’s tangled, for sure, but it could be worse, and it’s good for a kid who’s been on the run, out on his own. His clothes are in a similar fashion, definitely not clean, but not too torn. If anything, he just needs a haircut, actual clean clothes, and he would look like a normal boy.

Time seems to stop for a moment as Phil takes in the sight of Wilbur standing in the middle of the water, and Wilbur stares right back, his eyes stuck on Technoblade, who’s held in his arms, and the wings on Phil’s back, half stretched out from Phil preparing to fly off.

A second passes, two, and time continues, Phil blinking again as Wilbur seems to fully realize there's now an unfamiliar person at the other side of the river. He takes a careful step back, and Phil stays in place, scared that if he moves, the kid will run.

There's the sound of yelling in the trees nearby, people on horseback, and Phil is reminded that they're being chased. Wilbur's attention goes to the trees behind Phil, and his face is a mix of confused and panicked, stepping back and forth in the water like he can't decide on which direction he wants to go, towards Phil, or away.

Techno acts before Phil can think of anything, kicking his legs and trying to squirm out of Phil's arms, Phil nearly dropping him from the sudden struggle.

"Technoblade-! Hold on-" Phil fumbles, putting Techno down on the ground, and for a second he thinks he's about to sprint off, but Techno just takes two steps forward before stopping. He stands still, hands raised up to his mouth, as if he's going to yell something, but he doesn't, and instead just stares at Wilbur, mouth opening and closing. If Phil had to take a guess, he would say Techno's probably lost his words.

The sound of hunters get nearer, and Phil turns around just as they emerge from the trees. There's six of them, each holding a weapon in hand. Phil can see the realization and hesitation that flickers over their faces as they see Phil, and Phil frowns deeply in response, folding his wings back.

"Technoblade, stay behind me." Phil warns, pulling his sword, and he hears only small footsteps in response.

He glances behind him, and his heart drops as he finds Techno running towards the river, towards where Wilbur is wading through the water to get to the trees on the other side.

"Techno!" Phil yells, and he watches Techno's retreating back for a split second before turning back around and deciding he needs to get rid of the threat first. As much as he wants to try and grab the two of them and fly off, he also doesn't want to be holding a screaming child that's trying to escape his grip thirty feet up in the air.

Giving his attention to the hunters in front of him instead, he crouches down to grab a small rock from the ground, squeezing it in his palm. Six people, all on horseback, two people with crossbows, the rest with melee weapons, an axe, swords. It's hardly a fair fight, he's outnumbered entirely, but his chances don't feel that low.

Stifling down the worry from Technoblade running off, he hopes Techno knows what he's doing, and throws the rock through the air, aiming just right.

It hits squarely into someone's eye, and they fall off their horse with a scream. Phil rushes forward the moment they hit the ground, ducking as an arrow gets sent over his head. When the person on the ground looks up, Phil's already right there, too quick, with a sword raised high. He brings it down onto them without a single sliver of hesitation.

Shocked yelling rises up in the air, frantic threats being thrown towards Phil as he raises his head, pulling his sword out and raising it once more. He can't let them get past him, to follow down the river. Technoblade's been insistent with training, but he still shouldn't be in an actual fight, he's still too small. As for that boy in the river, Phil would rather he doesn't deal with any more hunters than he already has.

So he grabs another rock off the ground, ducks as a second arrow gets shot his way. He grabs the opportunity of surprise with both hands, spreading out his wings and pushing himself into the air, just high enough to slam his knee into someone's head, knocking them off their horse as well.

There's overlapping screams, people trying to make a half-baked plan to fight back against Phil, because they aren't prepared for this, they're not prepared to actually *fight*. They were expecting to capture a small monster who's been evading them for months on end, a kid. Not fight Phil, who's far more of a threat than Wilbur can be at the moment.

Technoblade gracefully ignores the commotion that breaks out behind him as he runs, trusting that Phil will be fine. His head seems to fall into a fight too, and he ignores the constant stream of words trying to give him half-baked advice.

*He's going to be **fine** , he's Phil!*

*Don't leave Phil?!*

*Turn back around!*

*Quick run faster, he's getting away!*

*You have a sword, **use** it!*

*Join the fight! Protect Phil!*

*Don't lose the kid!*

“Wait!” Technoblade yells at Wilbur, nearing towards the edge of the river just as Wilbur is about to leave it on the other side. A few rocks get kicked into the water as Techno comes to a sudden halt, just a few inches away from the rushing currents. “HEY!” Techno yells again, cupping his hands around his mouth. Wilbur looks back at him, eyes wide.

Techno looks down at the river before him with an unhappy expression, a deep frown setting in as he actually for a second considers turning back around. He knows he should follow, but everything in him is telling him to not touch the freezing water, because if there's one thing he knows he hates, it's the feeling of the *cold*. His head rises up in screams to just cross the damn river already, and Techno... *really* doesn't want to.

But it seems like he isn't going to have a choice, because Wilbur only gives Technoblade a minute before looking behind him, seeing Phil fight off two people at once. He seems to decide that's enough waiting, and he turns and runs into the forest, disappearing into the trees.

“Wait!” Techno yells, glancing back at Phil, who's actually doing pretty well for himself.  
“Come back!”

He can't just lose the kid when he's *right* there, with only a river in the way. Techno shoves down the annoyance creeping up in him at the fact his shoes are going to get wet, and he tells himself it's for Phil.

Running right into the shallow river still isn't easy, but at the very least chat is praising him for it.

It's cold, it's terrible, his shoes are soaked and it takes far too much time to run through the water in his opinion, but he gets through it anyway. The second he's out on the other side, he ignores how his shoes and pants, and even some of his shirt is soaked, and frantically goes to follow Wilbur, going into a sprint past the trees.

He runs straight, trying to not stress at the fact he's left Phil behind, that he's running into a forest he doesn't know, and that he's trying to chase another monster kid that he has next to no information for.

From what Techno knows, he's probably his age. Looks like a fish, almost like the ones Phil used to cook for him when he was younger, but a lot more blue.

That poster he had before, it wasn't new, he knows that much. This kid has been chased for a while.

His mind wanders to a book he read in the library a while ago, something of an adventurer who always got into trouble. He was wanted all across the lands, multiple bids on his head, because he always meddled with the kings of the land, who were always hurting the people in small ways, or being too greedy. Every now and then, in the story, there would be countless guards sent by those same kings, trying to capture him, but each time, the adventurer got away, just barely. Always running off to cause more trouble for the mean kings, and to escape more guards in the coolest ways.

Techno loved that book. It was a bit dramatic at times, but he loves the idea of never getting caught, always fighting back against the bigger people, who were never nice. Bigger people are always dangerous, always trying to hurt him. Except for Phil. Phil's always good.

If Phil was a person in that book, Techno would like to think he could be a nice king, who always covered for the adventurer. Privately, Techno always liked to think he could be that adventurer, causing trouble, then running to Phil's kingdom for safety, before running off again to continue his journey.

Techno's not an adventurer in real life, he can't escape in cool ways like he had read, and he can't fight back in big ways. But he can try helping, like that adventurer did. Fish kid is just like the people being hurt by their mean kings, just like him. He's not an adventurer, but he can be something similar, he hopes.

Technoblade keeps a hand on the hilt of the sword at his side as he sprints, hopping over roots and sticks in his path, trying to not trip. The chatting in his head has simmered down somewhat, now just excited for a chase, although some still insist on going back and using the very sword in Techno's hand. He tries to ignore that.

"Hey!" Techno yells out again, stopping for a second, panting.

He sees a glimpse of someone running, past the trees, and he picks on up his running again, frantically trying to follow.

"Hey, wait!" He runs faster, panting for air and ducking under low branches, weaving through the bushes and trees in his way. Part of him wonders if this kid is slow, because Techno seems to catch up in no time, creeping up on Wilbur with a rising hope that he can actually catch this kid. "Hold on!" Techno yells out, and Wilbur glances behind him with a shocked look, making a sharp turn and disappearing from view.

Techno comes to a sudden halt, breathing heavy as he turns his head, trying to figure out where Wilbur's gone. He peeks around the trees, turning around in circles, but he doesn't hear the sound of running footsteps. It's like he's just disappeared.

"Uhm, hello!?" Technoblade yells out, pausing, then starting again. "I- uh, I just want to talk! I think you'll want to talk with me, believe me!"

Silence.

Techno wonders if he's actually lost him, and disappointment crawls up his spine.

"I'm like you!" Techno tries, frowning with a huff. "We're- you've had people chasing you, trying to kill you, right? I also almost got killed. Because, I was-" He shrugs, resting a hand on his sword. "dangerous, or something."

He hears no response, and just as Techno is about to consider checking if the fish has climbed into the trees, there's a rustle of leaves and quick footsteps coming up behind him.

Technoblade spins around, not prepared to get suddenly pushed back, and he falls onto the ground with a scream.

Wilbur stands over him, hands curled into fists at his sides, and while he's trying to look threatening, it doesn't have much of an effect, because Techno just feels more annoyed than anything. That, and Technoblade has a sword. Fish kid doesn't.

"Ow." Techno deadpans, narrowing his eyes up at Wilbur, who makes an unhappy face back, face scrunched up. "What was that for?!"

"Stop. Chasing me!" Wilbur yells back, stumbling backwards as Techno pushes himself onto his feet, standing up straight with a groan. His shoes are wet, he's tired, he's cold, and he just wants Phil. But this kid is supposed to come with them, so.

Techno doesn't feel like fish kid is making a good first impression though. Could be better.

"What do you want?" Wilbur asks, voice tilting up in a whiny tone.

“Well, *I’m* just trying to talk to you.” Techno huffs, wrapping his arms around himself. “You’re not very good at letting me do that, though-”

“I don’t want to talk to you-”

“Well, I don’t really want to either, but Phil says you’re kinda like me, so.” Techno shrugs, kicking at the floor. “I...want to help.” Even though there’s a part of him that also wants to turn around and let fish kid disappear into the trees. Out of sight, out of mind.

Wilbur just stares at him, slight confusion on his face. “You’re nothing like me.” He looks over Techno again, seeming to consider something, before brushing it off. “Go away.”

“No.” Techno deadpans. “And you *are*- we’re like- Phil’s better at explaining this. Can we go back?”

“No!” Wilbur refuses, turning around and turning his back onto Techno. “What, so you can trap me? You’re probably leading the hunters right to me!”

“No I’m not!” Techno exclaims, slightly offended. “I don’t like those people either!”

“I don’t care.” Wilbur says in a singing tone, and he turns to Techno with a huff. “*Walk away and leave me alone, please.*” He asks, and his voice seems to echo in the trees, around Techno and a sweet, kind tone.

Techno just blinks. “Mmmnn, no.” He shakes his head.

Wilbur freezes, eyes going wide and he turns fully back around to Technoblade, taking a step back. “Wha-” He looks around. “You didn’t listen to me.”

“Why would I?” Techno asks. “You pushed me.”

“I pushed- well, yeah, because you were chasing me!”

“Well, I wouldn’t have been chasing you if you stopped running-”

“You-!” Wilbur sputters, words dissolving into nothing, and he clears his throat, glaring at Techno. “*Go away.*” His voice echoes a bit again, and Techno...doesn’t move.

“I’m not going to just *let you go.*” Techno waves his arms up, before crossing them across his chest. “We’ve been *trying* to look for you. For like, a long while now?”

“People are always looking for me.” Wilbur mutters, shaking his head and looking absolutely perplexed again. “You’re not listening to me.”

“No, because you pushed me-” Techno says again, almost bitter.

“Why isn’t my voice working?!” Wilbur yells, coughing for a moment. “Did- Did I overuse it? But I can still talk...” He looks down at his hands in front of him, confused.

“I mean, you’re talking just fine.” Techno gives as input. “Although your voice is kinda raspy. Are you sick?”

Wilbur makes a face towards Technoblade. “*Go away.*”

“No thank you.”

“*Leave me alone!*”

“No-”

“ *Turn around and- !*” Wilbur breaks off in a cough, holding a hand over his mouth. When he speaks again, his voice seems slightly more raspy. “You’re not listening to me!”

“And I’m not going to.” Techno frowns. “Are you done?”

Wilbur blinks at him, like he can’t believe Techno isn’t following his words, and his face shifts from confusion to shock, like a startling realization has come over him. “Wait. Wait, hold on.”

“What?”

“You said-” Wilbur blinks again, mouth opening and closing as he clears his throat, looking at Technoblade with a different light. “You said we’re the same.”

“I didn’t say that.” Techno disagrees, Wilbur’s face falling so quick that he rushes to follow it up with a rephrase. “I said that you’re *like* me. I’m not a fish.”

“Neither am I.” Wilbur mutters, but Technoblade begs to differ, from the fins at the side of his head. “You’re like me?”

Technoblade nods slowly, trying to think of what Phil would say. Wilbur’s gone from angry to just plain confused, and Techno doesn’t want to go back into yelling. He’s tired enough already.

Shoving down the way awkwardness is slipping into the air around them, Techno tries to stand up straight and tall, even with how he’s slightly shivering. He holds a hand out, like he’s seen Phil do with plenty of strangers, and for a second he thinks about trying to give a smile, but he gives up on that pretty quickly.

“I’m Technoblade.” He says, holding his hand up.

Wilbur stares, for an uncomfortably long time, before hesitantly raising his hand up and Techno’s hand in his, a small handshake. “Wilbur. My name is Wilbur.”

“Hello.” Techno pulls his hand back, wrapping his arms back around himself, Wilbur still having his hand raised up for a moment longer.

“Hi.” Wilbur says back, tilting his head. “Why doesn’t my voice work on you?”

“What do you mean?”

“My voice-” Wilbur clears his throat. “I can make people do what I say. I tell them to do something, and they’ll do it, right away.”

Techno raises his eyebrows, intrigued. “Really?”

“Yeah.” Wilbur nods. “It works on everyone. That’s how I’ve been able to always be one step ahead.” Wilbur grins, holding a finger up.

“Well, it doesn’t work on me.” Techno shrugs. “Try it again, do the voice.” Curiosity has taken over his mind, and Techno’s main priority is now to just see if Wilbur actually has powers. Because if he does, then that’s not only useful, but cool.

“It hurts my throat if I use it a lot.” Wilbur says, but he listens anyway. “ *Walk away.* ”

Techno doesn’t move, and Wilbur’s face shifts from slight disappointment, to conflicted, before settling on something excited.

“You didn’t listen.” Wilbur says, and Techno blinks.

“Wait, did you use it?”

“Yes, you didn’t even get affected by it!” Wilbur nods. “I’ve never met someone who doesn’t listen! That’s kinda annoying, to be honest, but you-” He stops, stammering over his words.

“Well, Phil says that we’re all part of a prophecy thing, so maybe I’m just immune.” Techno says quietly, Wilbur bursting out in a small laugh.

“You’re, you’re like me!” Wilbur takes a step towards Techno, Technoblade taking a step back with wide eyes. “You didn’t listen, you’re not even affected, so you must be like me!”

“Sorta.” Techno feels a smile creep onto his face, infected with Wilbur’s sudden raise in mood, hope.

“I’ve never- wow, I’ve never met someone like me!” Wilbur grins, Techno nodding quickly. “You, you have people trying to kill you too, right? That’s what you said.”

“They think I’m dangerous or something.” Techno agrees. “Which, true, but they’re just mean.”

“They’re bastards.” Wilbur hisses, smiling wide even with the hate in his tone.

“Phil says they’re scared.”

“Maybe they should be! I swear, everyone is always-” Wilbur cuts himself off, pausing. “Phil?”

Techno nods. “He’s...” my dad, Techno almost says, but he fumbles his words and instead says “that person you saw at the river? With wings?”

“He’s like a bird.” Wilbur notes, tapping his fingers against his chin. “He was fighting against the hunters, wasn’t he? That gives us time!” Wilbur grabs Techno by the sleeve, tugging at him, and Techno digs his feet into the ground, pulling back.

“Time for what?”

“To get away!” Wilbur waves a hand. “I’m good at escaping those guys, we can both make some good distance if we start running. Although, we do have to be careful, because sometimes there’s these traps placed down near towns-”

“We can’t leave!” Techno yanks his arm away, Wilbur looking surprised. “We have to go back!”

“What?!” Wilbur shrieks, trying to grab at Techno again. “Are you trying to get killed?!”

“Phil is back at the river, we need to go back to him-”

“You can’t trust random people!” Wilbur frowns. “Listen, sometimes I’ve done that, and it doesn’t go well! They’re always a trap, so you shouldn’t-”

“He’s not random!” Techno yells, and his voice goes sharp, Wilbur actually flinching back. “And he’s a good person! I know.”

Wilbur frowns. “Lots of people always seem like a ‘good person.’ You don’t-”

“*I know*.” Techno stresses, gritting his teeth. “Phil’s the best person I know. He’s a good one. Everyone else is stupid, you’re right on that one, but Phil isn’t.”

Wilbur doesn't look convinced, frowning. "Other people aren't good, Technoblade."

"Phil is." Techno insists. "Wilbur." He tacks on after, a hint of sass. "He's fought plenty of other people before."

"Yeah, well, they always have their arguments and stuff." Wilbur waves off, circling around Techno. "I've seen plenty of fights, just cause *he's* fought-"

"He fights *for me*." Technoblade cuts him off, and he reaches over and grabs Wilbur by the hand, stopping him in his tracks. "And he wants to fight for *you* too."

Wilbur pauses, staring at Technoblade's hand curled around his with an unreadable expression. "How are you sure of that?" He whispers.

"Why do you think he was fighting the hunters?"

Wilbur's eyes go wide, and he glares up at Technoblade huffing. "Maybe they were just hunting him."

"Then he's like us!"

"No he's not!" Wilbur yanks his hand away. "You don't know anything! You can't trust him, he's going to-" Wilbur freezes, going quiet.

Technoblade looks at him, confused, before hearing it too, footsteps crunching through leaves, coming fast towards him, and Techno turns around, hoping it's Phil who's caught up.

But when he turns, it's not the person he trusts, but rather a stranger who has an axe in hand and a bloody shoulder, staring at Wilbur and Technoblade with a triumphant look.

“Run!” Wilbur yells, grabbing Techno by the hand, and Techno pulls his sword, the two of them circling around a tree as they’re followed.

“We have to get Phil!” Techno yells,

“We’re not-” Wilbur goes to disagree, but they turn the corner to find the stranger right there again, and Wilbur gets kicked back with a scream.

Something gets thrown, and Techno ducks, scrambling to move as Wilbur’s suddenly caught in a net, trapped on the floor.

Techno turns on his heel, his head overlapping with panicked voices, and he knows he can’t leave Wilbur behind, so he holds up his sword, his head exploding in cheers, wanting a good fight, and the weapon in his hand feels hot, and everything is too loud-

“ *Drop your axe and get this off me.* ” Wilbur’s voice cuts through the growing panic, angry and scared, and Techno blinks, his hands shaking. An axe falls to the ground, Techno’s attention getting drawn to it as the hunter walks over to Wilbur to free him.

Techno runs towards the axe, picking it up with a tight grip. He lifts his head to the stranger in front of him running close up, then swinging it as soon as Wilbur is out from the net. Wilbur yells, stumbling backwards as the person falls onto the floor with swears rising through the air.

Everything is too loud, it’s too much, and Techno fumbles with the sword, both wanting to drive it into the person’s chest, and also wanting to run off, try and quiet it all down-

A hand curls around his wrist and yanks, Techno screaming as he’s pulled harshly by the hunter, who’s bleeding out of their leg. Wilbur runs forward, jumping onto the person’s back with his arms around their neck.

“Let go of him!” Wilbur says, his voice breaking halfway through, throat sore. “ *Let him-* ” He coughs, and then chokes as he’s elbowed in the chest, falling backwards onto the ground.

Techno’s yanked so hard he falls onto the ground, and his sword is taken away, ripped out of his hands. He kicks his legs up, screaming again and trying to hit the person in the chest, seeing Wilbur get up, about to run towards them.

Then, before Techno’s own sword is used on him, the hunter gets tackled from the side, disappearing from over Technoblade as he gasps for air. He turns his head, nearly wanting to cry when he sees Phil grappling for the sword, pulling it out of the stranger's hands and throwing it to the side.

He holds his own weapon with two hands, the one Techno chose for him, and he drives it down until there’s no more threat, and Techno’s voices simmer down at a fight well won.

Wilbur runs up to Technoblade, pulling him up. “Come on, come on, hurry-” He whispers, pulling at Techno’s hand.

Phil turns to them, breathing heavy. There’s bloodstains on his sleeves, and a cut on the side of his arm, but he looks fine, and Techno sighs of relief.

“Technoblade-” Phil breathes out, getting to his feet.

Wilbur forces Techno to stand behind him, even though Will himself is shaking from head to toe. “Stay right there!” He yells, clearing his throat. “Don’t move!”

“No, no, wait-” Techno tugs at Wilbur’s hand. “That’s Phil.”

Wilbur glances back at him with a frown, before looking at Phil again, who’s stopped in place, looking at the two of them with an emotional expression.

“Hey, mate.” Phil says gently, kneeling down. Wilbur takes a step back, pushing Techno back with him. “Hey, I’m- I’m sorry you had to see that.”

Wilbur just gives him an angry look, frowning deeply. “Go away.”

Phil smiles, huffing. “I’m not going to hurt you.” Somehow that riles up Wilbur even more, and he pushes back against Techno again.

“ *Turn around, and-* ” Wilbur’s cut off by Techno reaching up and slapping his hands over his mouth. Phil actually does turn around, confused for a moment, before looking back at Wilbur and Techno.

“No, he’s Phil! The one I said-”

“I know who he is!” Wilbur snaps back.

“Then stop it!” Techno crosses his arms, frowning. “He’s good.”

“I really don’t believe that.” Wilbur mutters, narrowing his eyes at Phil, or more specifically, the bloody sword he still holds. Phil follows his gaze, looking down to the weapon in hand, and he sighs quietly, giving a tired smile.

Wilbur flinches as Phil throws the sword to the side, the weapon landing in the dirt to the left of Wilbur and Techno, and Wilbur stares at it, Techno going to pick it up.

“See?” Phil raises his hands up. “I’m not going to do anything.”

Wilbur still isn’t convinced, and he looks to Techno, who’s trying to clean the sword with an unhappy mood. Mostly because he’s not cleaning it very well.

“This is a trap.” Wilbur whispers, Techno raising his head. “There’s bound to be more hunters nearby.”

Techno raises his eyebrows, looking skeptical, and he puts his attention to Phil. “Phil, did you get rid of the hunters?”

“They’re gone.” Phil reassures, Wilbur giving a dirty look. Phil tries to not feel offended by the constant glare he’s getting. He would feel hurt, but Wilbur’s face is too young to really give a harsh glare.

“They’re gone.” Technoblade repeats to Wilbur, fully trusting Phil’s word.

Wilbur sighs, looking around him. “We need to get moving anyways. We’re losing sunlight.” He turns his head to Phil. “You’re not coming with us.”

“Yes he is!” Techno cuts in, Wilbur crossing his arms.

“No he’s not!” Wilbur shakes his head. He leans in towards Technoblade, voice low. “You can’t trust him, he’s going to, to, take us as prisoners or something!”

“What if we take *him* as a prisoner first?” Techno suggests, Wilbur blinking.

One thing that Techno is sure of is that Wilbur does not like Phil, which is fine, he will, it’s a matter of time. But Wilbur’s wary, ridiculously wary, and while he’s...dumb, for not liking Phil, Techno kinda likes him. He’s never found someone his age to hang around with, and he feels like he knows Wilbur, somehow. He feels familiar.

So he presents that as a solution, and Wilbur agrees, declaring that Phil’s coming with them, but they’re in charge. He suggests tying Phil’s hands together, with the rope from the net that was used on Wilbur earlier, and Phil just holds back a laugh as Wilbur nods along with Techno.

“Do you know how to tie a knot?” Wilbur asks, Phil sitting still on the ground to the side, watching them both with an almost exasperated look as they cut rope.

“...Kinda?”

---

They don't know how to tie a knot. It takes several tries and Phil having to walk them through it before they get it right and they're able to somewhat restrain Phil.

#### Chapter End Notes

Wilbur towards Techno: friend, new friend, I trust him with my life

Wilbur towards Phil: evil.

\*jazz hands\* I don't know if I did good or not on this chap but I tried, we have fish boy, and I am excited

thank you for reading

# I see a monster, in front of me

## Chapter Notes

HEYYYYYYY

oh my gosh, it's been hectic

we got an animatic!!! (sorta, the first part of the vid is inspired by this story :D)

go check it out on youtube, "I hear a symphony" by Cowokie!!!

I don't know how to link (sadge) but you can look it up and it won't be hard to find. I recommend watching! It's beautiful.

Thanks for all the love for this story btw. I'm glad you enjoy it, haha

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“You need help?” Phil asks when he hears their whispered conversation, not nearly as quiet as they think they are. He gets a pair of narrowed eyes and a tiny smile in response to his question, exact opposites.

He’s not sure what he missed in the little time that Techno ran off, but from the looks of it, Techno’s easily gained the trust of the new kid.

However, as for Phil’s end, it’s clear that Phil’s isn’t trusted in any sort of way. That’s understandable, and Phil would be slightly hurt, if it weren’t for the fact that he’s too content with the idea of Technoblade making a friend.

“Yes.” Technoblade answers Phil, nearly instantly. Wilbur’s fingers tighten around the rope in his hands, and he exchanges a look with Techno, who blinks back, as if he can’t understand what the problem is.

“I know how to tie knots.” Phil says mostly to Wilbur, leaning forward but not making a move to get up. “Want me to teach you?”

Wilbur frowns, unhappy and wary, but Techno's already gathering up rope in his hands to carry over to Phil, balancing with the swords he's grabbed as well, his own and Phil's.

"Fine." Wilbur responds after a moment, nearly stomping as he walks over to Phil, right behind Techno, who has no hesitation in walking towards him. They both sit onto the ground, Techno throwing the rope down and then putting his sword back onto his hip, and holding out Phil's in front of him.

Wilbur grabs Techno by the arm. "Don't give it back to him!"

"But it's his?" Techno frowns, pulling the sword back, holding the hilt of it to his chest, the blade dragging along the dirt.

"So?"

Phil huffs, amused at the way Techno seems nearly offended at the idea of stealing something from Phil. It's not stealing, though, not really, but Techno seems hesitant on not giving the weapon back to its rightful owner.

"It's fine, mate." Phil waves a hand, the two of them turning their heads to him. "You can hold onto it for now. Rule one of having a prisoner, don't give them weapons." He says lightheartedly, grinning. "I could use it to get away."

"He's right." Wilbur nods, and then looks vaguely disgusted with having to agree with Phil. "No sword for you." He points a finger at Phil, and Phil just struggles to not smile too openly, instead focusing on taking the rope before him, untangling it.

"But it's *his*." Techno hugs the sword close, eyebrows scrunched up in thought. "What if we get attacked? He's going to need it then."

“He can deal with it.” Wilbur insists. “If you give it to him, he’s going to use it on us.”

“No, he wouldn’t.” Technoblade says.

“I wouldn’t.” Phil repeats, shrugging a shoulder. “But if you take me prisoner, I shouldn’t have a weapon.” He reminds lightly, Wilbur nodding once more.

Technoblade just seems even more conflicted, slight panic on his face. He turns to Wilbur.

“I don’t think we should take him as a prisoner anymore.”

“He’ll be fine.” Wilbur deadpans. “What if- If we get attacked, then, *maybe*, he can have a sword. We can give it back then.”

“Mmmn.” Techno makes a face, still flipping the thought over in his head. He doesn’t like the idea of Phil being defenseless. Although, then again, Techno has his own sword, if anything happens, he can deal with it. “Fine.” Techno nods. “I’ll protect you anyway.” He says off-handedly, putting the sword to the side on the ground.

Phil’s heart does a little swoop, and he wisely doesn’t mention the fact that he has a familiar dagger tucked away at his hip anyway, no need for the sword. He focuses on untangling the rest of the rope instead.

He goes through the motions of teaching the two of them how to tie a knot, practicing on his own ankle first for an example. His arm feels sore as he quietly explains as well as possible, and he knows there’s a light wound there that he should probably bring attention to, but it’s not life-threatening, so he leaves it be. Instead, he gives his attention to the two kids in front of him, who both listen attentively, and for a second, Phil forgets that the new kid doesn’t even like him, the kid being too focused to give a glare towards Phil.

Their first attempt results in the rope just falling apart from Phil’s wrists, and he has to desperately hold back a snort when Technoblade announces that the knot not staying together

was unfair.

Phil gives a light reminder on making sure that he's relaxing his wrists, and he shows an example as to what he can do if he isn't. The second attempt practically unravels on its own, but Phil shows how he could easily slip out of the rope if it's not put properly.

"I know that one." Wilbur says, as he fiddles with untying the knot in his palms, trying to salvage the rope. "There's been so many times where I just- slip right out because I'm small. They never actually tie it right. Idiots."

Technoblade snorts at the muttered insult, Wilbur smiling just the smallest bit in triumph.

There's a quiet burning anger in Phil's chest that jumps up at hearing that, but Phil keeps an easy smile instead, points out the fact that Wilbur is technically tying a knot, but he oughta be tying the ends together, to make a circle of rope.

The thought sticks in the back of Phil's mind, the idea of this kid being restrained or, gods forbid, in chains. It makes him want to grab the two kids in front of him and fly to somewhere safe, it makes him want to promise over and over that he will never let such a thing happen again. But it would be an empty promise even if he did say it, he knows that much. Technoblade knows that Phil can't fight the entire world, and Wilbur's distrustful.

Phil wants to prove the empty promise wrong. He would fight the world for them.

"What's your name? I'm sorry that I haven't asked." Phil questions, as they try their third attempt, Wilbur curling the ropes around his wrists.

Wilbur flicks his eyes up, hands hovering in place for a second as he looks at Phil with such distaste, as if Phil has insulted him to his face rather than having asked for his name.

"Wilbur." He hisses, grey eyes narrowed. "My name is Wilbur." He insists, like he's daring Phil to call him by something else. Phil has no doubt he's been called plenty of other things,

Phil has no doubt that his name has been discarded plenty of times, rarely respected and rarely used.

“Wilbur.” Phil repeats, keeping his voice calm. “That’s a nice name.”

Wilbur hands stay still in slight shock at the sound of Phil repeating his name, and his attention is stuck on Phil’s hands, like he’s trying to work out how to tie the rope, even though Phil knows for a fact he’s got it.

“I picked it.” Wilbur says quietly. “My name is Wilbur.” He repeats, and Phil just nods.

“You have a last name?” Phil asks, and he doesn’t move when Wilbur pulls at the rope to make it tighter. It’s nearly uncomfortable, but it’s bearable.

“No.” Wilbur responds.

“Neither do I.” Technoblade adds in at that moment, brushing hair out of his face. His braid has gotten messy, strands everywhere, and Phil would fix it, but it seems like this knot might actually stay. “I’m just Technoblade.”

“I’m just Wilbur.” Wilbur shrugs, a small grin at Techno. He leans back, letting Phil go. Phil lets his tied hands rest on his lap. “What about him?” He points to Phil, looking at him once more. “Are you just Phil?”

Phil smiles, huffing. “Might as well be. I haven't used my last name in a while. I don’t have a reason to.” There’s no point in using his last name for a family long gone. It doesn’t connect to anyone, it doesn’t mean anything. It holds no weight, and Phil didn’t need a way for others to know him.

“I want a last name.” Technoblade decides at that moment, picking up the sword beside him, heaving it up as he gets to his feet. “Phil, what’s your last name?”

“Uh-” Phil holds back a laugh. “Watson.” Usually to a question like that, he responds by saying ‘Phil, just Phil.’ But he doesn’t need to hesitate with Techno.

Technoblade makes a small smile, and the way he had asked made it seem like he didn’t know better, was naive to the idea of names. But he’s seen families before, he’s met others in that small village they lived in for so long, sharing last names, sharing blood-lines. He’s read books, he knows the concept of family.

He speaks like he doesn’t, and says it so lightly as if it means nothing.

“Okay, I’m Technoblade Watson now.” He says proudly, easily.

“I want a last name.” Wilbur mutters, almost jealous as he stands up to his feet.

“We can be matching. Wilbur Watson has a ring. Double W.”

“Hmm.” Wilbur makes a huff at Technoblade saying ‘double W’ before nodding and agreeing easily. “Yeah, I like that, that’s cool.”

“Our names now. Phil, I stole your name.” Technoblade says light-heartedly, turning his head to Phil. “Uh- Phil, Phil, are you crying-”

“A bug flew into my eye, mate.” Phil grins.

---

They move through the forest, Phil following the two of them with his hands tied in front of him. He’s fairly sure that if he tried hard enough, he could probably just snap the rope off and

be free, but he doesn't want to do that. The whole point of doing this is to make Wilbur breathe easier, start working on a path to some kind of trust.

Wilbur still eyes him warily, sticking close to Technoblade, and Phil holds back a quiet sigh. His heart is too content and relieved to be disappointed, but he does know this might take some time.

Techno and Wilbur talk quietly to each other, happy to have someone that's their age for once, and Wilbur fires off questions rapid fire, Technoblade answering them just as quickly. While they start at first about Phil, it drifts off into curiosity over other things, and Phil smiles as he hears them talk about frogs, of all things.

"But have you held one?" Wilbur asks, Technoblade adjusting the blade in his hands, Phil's sword held carefully.

"No, but they like rain, don't they?" Techno's read about that once, in a book. Facts about certain animals, he remembers.

"I like the rain." Wilbur grins, looking up at the sky. The clouds show no sign of oncoming storms, but Phil knows the weather can be unpredictable. For all he knows, it'll be pouring by next morning.

"I don't." Technoblade scrunches his nose in distaste.

"I do. You should try standing in the rain."

"It's *cold*."

"That's the best part!"

“I don’t like the cold.” Technoblade huffs, glancing back at Phil, who smiles knowingly. “I like the summer better.”

If Phil were to guess, it’s about spring season at the moment. He hasn’t been catching up with that, but he thinks that is what it is at the moment.

“I like winter. Have you seen snow?”

“No.” Technoblade says immediately. “Have you?”

“Once.” Wilbur sighs. “But I was inside for most of that time. I didn’t see a lot of it.”

“Phil, have you seen snow?” Technoblade goes to ask, turning his head to Phil as he continues to walk ahead.

“Yes.” Phil nods, thinking of the many travels he’s done over his life, flying through dropping temperatures, living in snowy towns. He’s familiar with the snow biome, familiar with the feeling of hypothermia. He has plenty of stories to tell. “I’ve been to a lot of places with snow.”

“I want to live in the snow.” Wilbur says with a light tone. “That, or by the ocean, or by a-” He pauses, stopping in his steps.

Technoblade stops too, his ear flicking as he tries to figure out why Wilbur’s stopped. Phil takes the moment to glance around for any movement, guard raised up in mere seconds.

“River!” Wilbur continues, and he breaks into a run, moving past the trees.

“Hey!” Techno yells, following right behind. Phil follows them both, making sure that they’re both in sight, and he’s slightly surprised to see the trees come to a stop, the sound of rushing water now registering in his head.

It's a shallow, clear river, filled with life through the greenery growing at the edges and the fish swimming down through the currents. There's nothing else to be seen other than just wildlife, and Phil's heart calms down. He walks over to the edge of the river, kneeling down beside the water.

"Oh, perfect, I was getting hungry." Wilbur says, Technoblade looking around at the vibrant scene, then being surprised as Wilbur hardly hesitates to jump over the rocks and run into the freezing waters.

Phil takes the time to wash blood off his hands. It's a bit difficult with his hands tied, but he makes sure to keep the rope dry.

Techno follows Wilbur up to the edge of the river, putting Phil's sword down, leaning against stone, and climbing onto a ledge of a big rock. He leans his chest against the stone, watching Wilbur walk around in knee deep water, then flinches back as Wilbur flings himself into the river, water splashing out.

Phil keeps an eye on both of them, keeping a bit of distance for the sake of Wilbur not needing to be wary. He observes the plants growing around them, remembering Wilbur mentioning about being hungry before jumping into the river.

Wilbur sits up out of the water, hair soaked, but looking absolutely excited. "Hey, hey, Techno!"

"What?" Techno asks, frowning slightly at how water drips from Wilbur's hair, freezing cold. It reminds him of how his shoes are still damp, still drying in the sun from having to run through a river earlier.

"Hold your hands out!" He says, then his head goes back into the river, Techno hesitantly sitting up straight and holding his hands out, cupped together. He looks to Phil further down the river, his expression shifting from hesitant to content at Phil giving him a smile.

The smile is wiped off his face and replaced with surprise when Wilbur pops out of the river again, appearing in front of Technoblade, and spitting out a fish into his palms.

“I got you a fish.” Wilbur grins, all sharp teeth. He looks proud, giddy at getting his new friend some food. He’s also soaking wet.

Technoblade blinks, his head a mixture of screaming and also being touched that Wilbur brought a fish. He’s conflicted towards being slightly grossed out or being thankful.

“...thaaaanks...” Techno says slowly, because Phil’s taught him some manners, at least. He cringes when the fish flops slightly in his hands, still dying from the bite mark in its side. “Oh- It’s not dead.”

“Should I bite it again?” Wilbur asks, Technoblade feeling slightly sorry for the fish dying pathetically in his hands.

“Maybe?”

Phil sputters, pushing himself to his feet. “Did- did you just catch that in your mouth?”

“Yup.” Wilbur nods, quickly rushing back to the river as Phil walks over. “You don’t get any fish.”

“You can have some of my fish.” Technoblade says quietly, looking up at Phil as he stops beside Technoblade. “I can share.”

“It’s fine, Techno, I’m not hungry.” Phil reassures. “And, mate, Wilbur-” He calls, Wilbur stopping in his search for another fish, raising his head to Phil. “Hey, I can catch food, you don’t need to go sticking your head into the river.”

Wilbur sinks down into the water, until the currents are just barely tickling his chin. “I can catch my *own* fish.”

“Of course you can.” Phil says gently, smiling even as Wilbur narrows his eyes, the scales on his face seeming so much more prominent against the water. “But wouldn’t it be easier if I did it for you?”

“I don’t *need* you to do it for me.” Wilbur insists, sitting up in the water. “And you don’t even have sharp teeth.”

Phil laughs, as if Wilbur’s told a funny joke, and Wilbur blinks at him, a tad confused.

“I don’t use my teeth for catching fish.” Phil waves his tied hands up in front of him. “Here, look, you can come sit by Techno, let my hands free for a moment, and I’ll catch some fish for you two, okay?”

Wilbur frowns, still wary.

“Hmmm.”

“I say yes.” Techno says loudly, Wilbur looking at him. “Phil’s caught fish for me before. He’s good at it.”

“Thanks, Techno.” Phil smiles.

It takes a minute or two more of convincing, but eventually Wilbur does leave the river. Only after he’s caught another fish in his mouth, though.

When he does come out, Phil lightly suggests tying the mess of his hair back, giving a little hairtie into Wilbur’s outstretched palm. Wilbur brushes his hair back, but doesn’t quite know

how to put it back into a ponytail. Phil would help, but his hands stay tied, and he doubts Wilbur would let him anywhere near him.

Technoblade ends up doing it for him, and Wilbur is content with that. Phil is just glad that the hair is finally out of his face.

Phil's hands are let free soon after, and he walks into the moving water, waiting until Wilbur is preoccupied with chatting with Techno until he reaches for his knife, going to catch fish.

Wilbur sits right beside Technoblade on a big rock, the two of them sitting out in the sun right beside the river.

"Why aren't you eating your fish?" Wilbur asks, pointing at the fish he had gotten for Techno, which sits on the rock in front of him.

"I'm waiting so Phil can cook it."

"You eat your fish cooked?" Wilbur asks, making a face.

"You eat your fish *raw*?"

"Yeah?" Wilbur blinks. "You don't?"

"Mate, have you eaten food that's cooked?" Phil asks, slightly worried.

"Yeah." Wilbur answers, crossing his arms. "But also I don't always have time to cook fish. I can't make a fire."

"I can." Technoblade nods. "Phil taught me."

“Hmm.” Wilbur looks a mix of upset and intrigued, and he leans back. “Well, we can’t make a fire anyway. We have to keep moving before the hunters get back to town to tell about us.”

“They won’t.” Phil says then, pulling a fish off his knife. “The coast is pretty clear, and this is a good place for the night, don’t you think?” He turns to Wilbur, who then finally spots the small dagger in Phil’s hands. His eyes go wide, and he leans just a bit closer towards Technoblade, lips pressed tightly together.

Phil wants to frown, huffing at the afraid look on Wilbur’s face.

“How would you know if the coast is clear?” Wilbur asks, a slight wavering in his voice.

“I did fight the hunters, mate. Believe me, they won’t be snitching.” Phil grins, putting the dead fish down in front of Wilbur, careful to keep the knife pointed away, into the water. “Hey, Tech, why don’t you and Wilbur find somewhere to make a fire, yeah? I’ll keep collecting fish.”

Techno nods, climbing off the rock, Wilbur following right at his heels. They go into the trees, not too far for Phil to no longer see them, but far enough from the river for the water to not be too loud.

Phil sees the way Wilbur glances back behind him at Phil, chatting with Technoblade with a nervous tilt in his tone, and Phil’s heart stings.

He goes to collect fish.

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The daylight leaves rather quickly, Technoblade being able to get a small fire going, and Phil being able to adjust it properly so it’s warm and bright.

They cook fish at the fire, Wilbur still seeming skeptical about just not eating the fish raw, but he seems to like it after Phil's cooked it properly, and added some greens he found at the riverside.

The forest around them is nearly quiet, small sounds of wildlife, wind, but no footsteps or signs of danger. Phil doesn't get his hands tied up again, and Wilbur insists it's only because he needs Phil to cook the fish.

Phil just thanks him, and doesn't mention the way Wilbur's hands tremble when Phil still has his hands untied long after the food is done, all eaten. Wilbur doesn't insist on tying them again. Phil doesn't say a word, only tries to be as kind as possible to the careful step of trust.

Technoblade knocks out not soon after, wrapped up in Phil's coat, curled up beside the dying fire. Phil sits by him, and he would lay down and sleep beside Techno normally, but he can't.

Wilbur sits by himself, curled up at the base of a tree, back leaning against it. He's awfully far from the fire, from Phil, and it hurts to see him like that.

He's pretty sure Wilbur's not even asleep, his face tucked into his arms, shifting in place every few moments. He goes dead still whenever Phil turns his head to him.

"Wilbur." Phil says quietly, through the dark. Wilbur flinches. "Why don't you come sleep next to Techno?"

He doesn't get a response, and he holds back a sigh, instead just giving it a minute. When nothing comes after that, he stands to his feet.

Wilbur sits up sharply at that, acting as if he was never asleep.

“Will.” Phil whispers, sitting down beside him, and not saying anything when Wilbur scoots away, turning so he’s facing Phil. “Hey, I wanted to talk.”

“About what.” Wilbur asks, eyes flicking to Technoblade for a second, who snores on quietly.

Phil looks at Technoblade too, smiling at seeing him sleep peacefully, undisturbed. He turns his attention back to Wilbur.

“You don’t have to be afraid of me, you know.” Phil says gently. “I really do mean it when I say I’m not going to hurt you.”

“I’m not *scared* of you.” Wilbur spits out, lifting his knees up to his chest and tucking his face away, bright eyes staring up at Phil. “I just don’t trust you. It’s different.”

“Why don’t you trust me?” Phil asks, even though he knows plenty of reasons why. He’s a stranger, someone unknown. While Wilbur’s made a connection with Technoblade, he’s not willing to have one with Phil.

“Because I don’t.” Wilbur answers. “You’re not like us. Like me. Techno says you want to help, but lots of people have said that to me before.”

“And I’m guessing that it never ended well, huh?”

Wilbur nods, just barely. “The- The last person who said they wanted to help- I used to live in a little house with them, she let me stay for a few days. One day I woke up, and she was gone. No note, no warning. I waited, but she didn’t come back.”

Something in Phil’s chest tugs at the waver in Wilbur’s voice.

“I never saw her again. Days later, hunters came searching through the house. I left.” Wilbur pauses for a moment, and Phil hears quiet chirping of cricket in the night. “You’re not like us. You’ll leave. That or you’ll give us over.”

“I wouldn’t. I’d *never*.” Phil promises, but it holds no weight to Wilbur. “How am I not like you?” He asks, curious as to what he means.

“We’re monsters.” Wilbur says, raising his head from his knees. “Me and Techno. We got hunters breathing down our backs. I doubt you have the same.”

Phil smiles, a hint of amusement. He holds his palms out, wings shifting behind him as he closes his eyes for a moment.

It’s true, partially, of what Wilbur says. Phil doesn’t get hunted for seeming dangerous, doesn’t get feared for how he looks, for his traits. The wings on his back are held with awe or respect, curiosity, because people never see such a thing. People see him and don’t think ‘monster’, but rather just see another person, with a peculiar set of wings on his back.

But that’s only because Phil holds himself like that. He grins, he talks lightly, stays friendly rather than keep a straight face. He’s naturally kind, that’s just his personality, but he has his moments of anger too. Moments of being unkind, nearly cruel, and in those moments, he knows how people would view him.

“What do you see in front of you, mate?” Phil asks, opening his eyes and seeing Wilbur stare up at him, expression in shock.

Phil has his moments, he knows that. He’s kept it tightly locked up, under wraps. But it’s easy to breath out and have it really show, have his nails be too sharp, have his eyes glow unnaturally bright.

Phil grins, and Wilbur stares with wide eyes, stuck on the sharp smile pointed towards him. He looks to Phil’s hands, which were always capable of killing, but now seem even more so, pointed edges at the ends of his fingers.

“...you’re a monster.” Wilbur says, quietly, and it’s not an insult, but rather the truth. “Like me.”

“Always have been.” Phil whispers. “I won’t lie and say I’m just like you, Wilbur, I’m not. I’m- I’m luckier, than most. But that doesn’t change the fact that I still want to help. I want to fight for you, and I want to make it so you never have to be hurt again.”

Wilbur’s still stuck staring, mouth slightly open as he looks at Phil’s eyes. Phil knows they must be glowing against the dimness of the night.

“Will you let me?” Phil asks.

There’s a heavy silence for a long while, Wilbur seeming to turn his words over in his mind, trying to make sense of it. For once, the knee-jerk response of distrust is gone, and it just leaves a kid who’s confused, and nearly scared.

Another minute passes, and Phil stays still as Wilbur reaches a hand out towards Phil’s. He grabs him by the wrist, turning it so his palm faces towards Will.

He places his hand against Phil’s, holding it there, palm to palm.

“I don’t know.” Wilbur answers, barely loud enough for Phil to hear. His voice wavers dangerously, and he seems too confused. “I don’t get it.”

“That’s alright.” Phil reassures, Wilbur pushing against his hand.

“I don’t get *you*.” Wilbur says honestly. “Why?”

“Why what?”

“Why do you-” Wilbur breaks off, his voice nearly cracking.

Phil’s heart hurts, and while he wants to wrap Wilbur up into a hug, he doesn’t, and instead just holds Wilbur’s hand tightly. “I just want to help.”

“But *why*?”

“Why wouldn’t I?” Phil says. “You don’t deserve to be hunted down, Wilbur.”

Phil doesn’t say anything when Wilbur’s eyes well up with tears, and he doesn’t say a word when Wilbur grabs Phil’s palm with two hands and holds it to his forehead, gripping tightly. He stays quiet, wings hovering around them both, and he lets Wilbur cry himself out, silent tears as he curls in on himself, a death grip around Phil’s hand.

He lets him cry until he’s done, and when Wilbur’s done, he carefully moves forwards to pick him up off the ground. Phil stays lingering in place for a moment, Wilbur nodding off in his arms, and he goes to put Will beside Technoblade, letting the two of them sleep.

## Chapter End Notes

Hi hi!

Again saying you should totally go check out that animatic, it's so cool, I can't believe we got an animatic, that's so cool!! Also fan art too!! I get a lot of fanart, and if you have any, you can tag me @sircantus, it's the same username for like, all my social medias, I love seeing it, it makes my day

but anyway anyway, thanks for reading. Sorry for a long while on the update, haha life.

Here's to hoping summer comes quickly. Ah, the time I'll have to write then.

Till next chapter :P

# Unfamiliar kindness

## Chapter Notes

This chapter shall be dedicated to Shwrubbery, because they left a bookmark that said 'Another Phil adopts sleepy bois but this time there's \*murder\*, wait no that's all of them...'

it made me laugh

enjoy the chap

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Phil doesn't go to sleep right away.

It's plenty late, and they're pretty safe this deep in the forest. He knows that there won't be a single hunter after them from earlier, because he didn't leave a single one alive. Part of him feels guilty for doing such a thing, but it also feels justified, because those hunters had been after Wilbur and Wilbur alone.

Who's a kid. A little kid, just as Phil feared, and he's not exactly sure what age he is, but he knows he has to be at least around Techno's age. That thought tears at his heart, and Phil can't sleep, can't sit and be still.

He paces quietly, fingers grazing at the end of his feathers, lost in thought. Two out of three, he has two out of the three kids now, but that doesn't mean it'll be easy. Wilbur still doesn't trust him, maybe a small bit, from the conversation earlier and from first impression, but it's still not enough. From what little Phil can pick out from Wilbur's words, his behavior, he's been on his own on and off. He's been hurt too many times.

He's a bright kid, for sure. With Techno, it seems easy, it seems like Wilbur is just a normal child who wants to chat for hours, but when Phil comes near it becomes apparent on what

he's been through. With Techno, he's chatty and open, with Phil, he gets wary, tries to stay away. He doesn't like adults.

Phil hopes that Wilbur won't end up running off, that he'll at the very least stay for Techno. He needs time to show Wilbur that he's not a threat, and that he's here to stay. He's not sure what happened with anyone before, and he's not sure how Wilbur's gotten this far, but the main goal here is to make sure Wilbur doesn't have to live like that anymore.

Gods, he needs to make sure that the next kid won't live like that either.

Settling down somewhere while gaining Wilbur's trust isn't an option. It's the ideal option, it's what Phil's heart is saying, find a safe place, and prove to the kid that he's here to stay. But he can't choose that yet. If he dawdles, this might happen again with the next kid, and he'll be damned if he lets that happen.

But at the same time, the last kid will be either the hardest or the easiest to pick up. Time will pass, and Phil knows that word will eventually get out that he's taking the kids in. Word will eventually spread of what he's doing, and what he's done. He knows that the hunters from earlier, their fates won't be a one time thing.

Which, he's perfectly fine with. Blood on his hands isn't exactly something he will shy away from. He's killed many, many people over his lifetime. Some who deserved it, and regrettably, some who didn't. Either way, it's all been the same. He's never lost a fight, not really.

He's reminded of the wound on his arm from earlier, a bad cut from not dodging quick enough for a swinging axe. The necklace around his neck is tucked underneath his shirt, but he knows it has been glowing brightly red for the whole day.

Poking at the cut on his arm, he frowns a little at the bloodstain left behind, but isn't at all surprised to find the cut completely gone. It's healed just fine, not a single mark left behind from the fight that had happened just today.

There's a bitter taste in his mouth at the thought of having to endure any worse injuries, especially in front of his boys. He knows he'll be fine, he always will be, with this necklace around his neck, but it doesn't make it any less painful. It doesn't make it any less bitter.

He pushes those thoughts away before they spiral into something more, and he turns to look at Wilbur and Technoblade, still sleeping soundly on the ground. Phil's coat has been jostled from the two of them shuffling around in their sleep, and Phil takes a moment to carefully lean down and fix it.

Wilbur's foot kicks out in his sleep, hitting Phil's shin lightly, and Phil smiles. He's reminded of the fact that the kid doesn't have any shoes, barefoot in this dirty forest. It's a wonder that he hasn't stepped on something sharp, either in the dirt or in the river.

Although, then again, maybe he's a bit used to it, judging by the way his feet look battered but tough, blue scales scattered at the back of his ankles. Phil's heart hurts at the idea of the kid going barefoot for so long, but he also can't help but huff quietly in amusement at the idea of getting him shoes. He remembers Techno's reaction to first getting proper boots. To a kid who's more used to being barefoot, shoes are a nightmare.

Phil stands to his feet again, watching the two of them snooze on for a moment before pacing quietly again, his mind catching on to the fact that new shoes won't be the only thing Wilbur needs. His clothes are torn at the edges, not falling apart, but definitely not enough to protect him properly from the elements.

And that hair.

It's still tied back, from the hair tie that Phil gifted, but it's become loose by now, and some strands are falling onto his face, sticking up in wild directions. Techno's hair has become more or less a mess by now too, but it's nothing compared to Wilbur, who definitely has some dirt stuck to his curls.

At least it's not too terribly tangled.

A haircut, new clothes, new shoes. The kid will need a hood of some sort, or a hat, to cover those fins for ears when they travel through towns. Phil's not sure if he's going to be able to convince all of that onto Wilbur when the time comes, but he hopes that Wilbur will go along if he understands it's to make him safer.

Phil hums quietly, wings shifting behind him as he pauses in place. It'll be a bit harder to travel now, since he's not too sure how far he can fly with two kids in tow.

Then again, that's if Wilbur will even let himself be carried into the air.

Time, time, that's what Phil *needs*. He needs time to get to Wilbur, he needs time to bond to him, and he needs time to find the last kid before anything happens. He wants to find the last one young, as soon as possible.

Once he has all of them, then it's a matter of finding somewhere safe to hide, and then it's just a matter of being a dad, of raising them well.

Phil's mind stumbles over that, a rush of fondness in his veins.

He looks to Wilbur.

There's not much he knows of the kid. He doesn't know his favorite food, doesn't know his quirks. He doesn't know what he's been through, what he thinks. Wilbur's scared of him, and that hurts, but it doesn't change the way Phil looks at him.

Phil sees that young, dirty face, and all he can think is 'my kid.' My kid, who needs a haircut.

He huffs quietly again, looking away and staring up at the stars instead. He doesn't think he'll be able to sleep tonight. There's something burning in his chest, and he can't tell if it's anger, protectiveness, or something fond.

Either way, it keeps him up, and Phil chooses to sit a small distance from Techno and Will, not too far, just close enough to reach them if anything were to happen.

He watches the stars over his head and listens to the forest around him, and he runs his fingers through his own feathers, keeping watch for the whole night.

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Wilbur wakes up slowly.

It's not how he usually wakes up, because usually when he wakes up, it's sudden, eyes snapping open from either being forced awake from nearby hunters, or from a deep panic of needing to keep moving.

His mouth is dry, and his limbs feel sluggish. Not in a bad way, rather in a way where he can tell he was completely knocked out, in deep sleep for a long while. He surprisingly doesn't have that much aching all over, even though he expects it. He usually sleeps in weird places, having a bed is a rarity, and he's slept up in trees, slept in the rushing waters of a river, slept tucked away in ditches.

He feels rested, drowsy, and it's a bit off-putting. There's something soft laying over him, and he blinks his eyes open to the sunlight of the forest on his face.

There's the smell of something cooking, and Wilbur rubs at his eyes, yawning quietly, stretching his arms high up towards the sky, groaning slightly.

Looking to his right, he's met with a young sleeping face.

Everything in him goes on alert, his body freezing in panic and fear as he tries to scoot back a little, but then everything comes rushing in from before, and little bits slot themselves into his head as he realizes properly what's going on.

Technoblade, Techno, the one he met yesterday, he's sleeping soundly right beside him, sharing what looks to be-

Wilbur grabs at the soft fabric over him, and finds it to be a coat, draped over him and Technoblade in their sleep. He can't help but run his thumbs over it a few times, happy with the sensation. His clothes always get ruined and dirty from being on the run, but this, this is more clean, more soft.

And it must belong to Phil, he realizes, and he jerks his hands away from it like it's burnt him. He scoots out from under the coat, sitting up, and turning his head to find a fire crackling nearby, with Phil kneeling down beside it.

He's cooking fish, Wilbur realizes. That's what he had been smelling when he woke up.

Wilbur blinks, and he can't help but stare for a minute or two at Phil. Phil's not looking at him, back turned, (even though Wilbur should be known as dangerous?) and he's preoccupied with the fire and food in front of him.

His wings are in open view for Wilbur to see, to grab, if he runs fast enough, and Wilbur's not sure if the man is either too confident, or too dumb.

Most people who turned their backs to Wilbur were one of those two. It always worked in his favor, because they would be sure that Wilbur wouldn't be able to do anything while restrained, and then they would get attacked from behind, from him using his claws against their neck.

He's never actually killed anyone like that, but it's always effective enough to get him a way out.

Wilbur raises his hands up in front of him, checking for if Phil's tied his hands while he was asleep, but there's nothing. He checks his feet, and there's nothing as well.

Turning his head to Technoblade, he lifts the coat to check if Techno's been tied up either, but no, it seems like they've been left alone.

The conversation from last night plays in Wilbur's head, and something tugs in his chest. He feels like crying again, and he swallows back a tight feeling in his throat, looking at Phil again.

Wilbur knows what he's doing. He's gotten this far. He knows who can be a benefit to him, and he knows who can be a threat.

Phil's...just confusing, though.

It's not that Wilbur hasn't met people like Phil, he's met others with the same promise. Adults who swear that Wilbur is going to be just fine under their care, until something happens, until the hunters arrive, until they realize that Wilbur isn't worth risking their own lives.

He's sure that Phil fits into that category of being sympathetic, but Wilbur's never found something like that who's also *fought* for him. Who actually saw the hunters coming after Wilbur, and still stuck around, even with the very obvious, glaring threat of having Wilbur nearby.

Maybe the man just doesn't have self preservation.

Maybe this is another lie, something to lure him in, and think it's all going to be just fine, until one morning he wakes up in another cage, sold over while being asleep.

That thought sends a sharp fear down his spine, and Wilbur pulls his knees up to his chest, eyeing Phil warily.

He wants something safe, he always has. But this can so easily be a trick, and Wilbur refuses to be tricked again.

He looks down to Technoblade's sleeping face. Wilbur refuses to be tricked, and refuses to have Technoblade be tricked too.

As far as Wilbur is concerned, he's just going to have to help Techno out with surviving. He's got experience, he's sure that he can keep them both safe. Technoblade seems a bit naive, trusting Phil so earnestly, but Wilbur can help. He can help, if it's for Techno.

Technoblade feels familiar. Even now, looking at his face, sleeping with a light snore, Wilbur feels like he's connected to him, somehow. Something in him whispers quietly that Techno is important, and Wilbur believes it wholeheartedly. He's never seen this kid in his life, but Wilbur feels like he should know him, should know this face.

He has heard the name 'Technoblade', though. Thrown around by the hunters from time to time, said with an underlying tone of fear. He's heard snippets of conversations, quiet voices far away while he hides. Technoblade, Technoblade, something that also needs to get caught, or something that the hunters hope is dead.

That just makes the two of them even more the same. They're both getting hunted, they're both monsters. That's gotta count for something.

Wilbur turns his gaze onto Phil, who hasn't yet seen Wilbur awake.

Wilbur could *talk* to him right now. He can catch him off guard, make Phil leave and forget why he's even leaving. He should, he should make Phil go, even with his throat being sore as it is, he should still use it and keep him and Techno safe.

He gets to his feet, standing with his arms held out at his sides, ready for Phil to turn around and grab him, to use that knife he had yesterday. He's prepared for it, he can take him, Wilbur's small but he has his voice, and he can use it.

Phil raises his head, hearing Wilbur stand up behind him, and he turns, finally noticing.

Wilbur opens his mouth, gets ready for Phil to rush at him, try and stop him-

“Oh, Wilbur.” Wilbur’s words die in his throat, and all he gets out is a small squeak. He feels his face go warm.

Phil grins, not getting up from where he is, not coming towards him at all, and he just stays kneeling by the cooking fish. There’s no knife in his hands. “Mornin, mate.”

Wilbur doesn’t respond, instead he stays standing awkwardly, wide eyes stuck onto Phil, and Phil hums, not seeming bothered by the silence. He glances back to the fish, poking at the stick it’s impaled on.

“Did you sleep well?” Phil asks, and Wilbur doesn’t hear any hint of a harsh tone, poking fun. His voice sounds honest, *kind*, and it feels like a slap in a face compared to Wilbur’s expectations.

“You still half-asleep, mate?” Phil asks when Wilbur doesn’t respond, a teasing tilt in his voice, but it’s not cruel. “Want some food to wake you up?”

Wilbur blinks, holds his hands to his chest, curled up into tight fists. “Food?” He repeats, voice scratchy, and he smells the cooking fish again.

He wants some, he does, and he is kinda hungry, but he’s not sure if Phil will actually give him some. He’s not sure if Phil will just laugh and say it was a joke, he’s not giving Wilbur that fish, the food is for him only.

“Yeah, I cooked some fish, if you’re up to eat.” Phil nods, and he waves a hand for Wilbur to come over.

“What about your food?” Wilbur asks, narrowing his eyes and staying firmly in place.

“I already ate, don’t worry.” Phil reassures, and he holds out a fish cooked on a stick, still steaming. “You can go back to sleep, if you want. It’s a bit late in the morning, but a few extra minutes never hurt.”

Wilbur coughs against his palm as he shakes his head, everything in him telling him to be careful, to stay away, to watch himself.

He takes the fish from Phil’s hand, ignoring how his fingers tremble when he stumbles forward.

Phil doesn’t say a word about it, and lets Wilbur step back with the food. Wilbur sits down next to Technoblade, who sleeps on like a rock, and he stays staring at Phil, a deep frown set on his face.

Phil just hums, his wings shifting from behind him as he adjusts the other fish that are cooking.

Wilbur swallows back the fear that's swirling around in his chest, and he eats quietly, quickly. He’s used to the cold fish straight out of the river, still flopping around between his teeth. He’s a little less used to the tasty cooked fish in his hand, which nearly burns his tongue when he goes to bite into it. He blows gently at it, nibbling quietly, and thinking to himself that maybe Phil is pretty good. If he can give Wilbur food like this all the time, then maybe, *maybe*, Wilbur will let him follow.

“Want another one?” Phil asks, as soon as Wilbur is finished, an empty stick in his hands, and Wilbur nods with his arms held out.

Phil can stay, Wilbur decides, as he eats a second fish.

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Technoblade wakes up not that long after, slightly grumpy and with his hair in a mess. Phil brushes his hair for him, pulls it back into a neat loose ponytail with a small braid at the side. For Techno, it's routine, but for Wilbur, he can't help but stare and blink slowly as he nibbles at his third fish of the morning.

Phil doesn't tug Techno around by the hair, instead his hands are gentle, light, and Techno seems to trust Phil enough to close his eyes and nearly doze off. Wilbur yells at him to stay awake, and Phil only laughs at the way Techno startles with his voice, sitting up sharply.

Wilbur feels like he's very out of place, watching the two of them.

A traitorous part of Wilbur wonders if Phil could brush *his* hair back, braid it into something nice, but he shoves that part down, deep, deep down, and chews a bit violently at his fish.

He can do his own hair, by just pushing it out of his face and calling it a job well done, but that doesn't stop the quiet urge to get what Techno's getting, a small bit of jealousy.

It's easy to ignore, though, Wilbur would rather keep far away from Phil's hands anyway. As much as he likes the idea of his hair getting brushed back with care, he's not sure if Phil would even want to brush his hair.

Techno offers to pull his hair back into a small ponytail like yesterday, and Wilbur is tempted to say yes, but he shakes his head no at the last moment, even with the tug on his heart. He doesn't want anyone near his hair. He's afraid if he says yes, he's not going to be able to say no ever again.

He lets his hair fall loosely just above his shoulders, falling in front of his eyes, into his face. Phil gives him a strange look when he pushes his bangs out of the way, and when Wilbur narrows his eyes in response, Phil just smiles.

They choose to keep moving, walking through the forest persistently, taking breaks here and there.

Phil's hands are tied back up, this time with only minimal struggle, and only a bit of fumbling. Wilbur and Techno take turns holding Phil's sword, since he's still not allowed to have it back, and Wilbur chooses to simply not say a word about the knife he knows Phil has.

Phil walks in front of them, according to his advice, because prisoners should always be kept in sight. Which makes sense, to Wilbur. If Phil walked behind them, he could attack, or run away.

Although, then again, Wilbur wonders why Phil hasn't just *flown* away at this point. His wings are just fine.

The sun is a bit low in the sky when they come across a small village, easily visible from the hill they stand on. They're hidden away in the trees, so there's no threat of being spotted when Wilbur squints down at the buildings.

"We should go around." Wilbur advises, because towns hold people, and the people always know his face, and always call for the hunters.

"But we could buy stuff." Techno shifts the sword in his hands, looking Wilbur up and down, and raising an eyebrow as if Wilbur is supposed to get what he's saying. Wilbur looks at himself. He's not sure what he's supposed to be seeing.

"We don't have money." Wilbur frowns.

"I do." Phil speaks up then, and they both turn to Phil, Techno smiling. "I say we go in, mate, we can just walk in if we're covered up enough."

"We'll get caught." Wilbur says. "Why would we go to a town anyways? We ate this morning."

“Well, I’m pretty sure we could buy a room for the night.” Techno points out. “And, clothes?”

Wilbur blinks, Phil and Techno seeming to be in silent agreement over the state of Wilbur’s clothes.

“Huh?”

---

They walk into the town, just like Phil said. Wilbur’s heart is beating loudly in his ears as he walks close to Technoblade, so close that their shoulders bump with each step. Techno reaches a hand out, and Wilbur grabs on without a hint of hesitation. They don’t need to look at each other to agree to stay holding on until they’re somewhere out of sight.

Phil’s hands have gone untied, and Wilbur’s begrudgingly agreed to gift his sword back to him, at Techno’s insistence that he’ll need it if a fight breaks out.

Wilbur chooses to agree, only because Techno seems set on them going into the town, and Wilbur doesn’t want to split up.

They walk through the town, Phil holding them close with one arm, seeming determined to get where he needs to go. Wilbur’s not entirely focused the entire way they go through, the only thing he zeroes in on is the grip Technoblade has on his hand, and the light weight of Phil’s hand on his head.

He wants to run, he wants to hide where no one will look his way, and his mind makes up the worst situations, Phil walking them into a trap, hunters spotting them from across the street-

But they’re left alone, and Phil continues to walk with the assurance of a traveler who knows where he is, and knows where to go. No one spares a glance, no one thinks he’s suspicious, because he walks with a smile and shows only the image of a dad walking down the street

with his two kids. No one looks close enough to see the fins that poke out from Wilbur's hair, no one looks close enough to see Techno's red eyes. Wilbur and Techno stay huddled close, against Phil's side, and Phil walks.

They walk into a building, a man sitting at the counter. He looks up at Phil the moment he walks in, and Wilbur looks down, keeps his eyes on his feet, tries to stay calm, because it's fine, they're fine.

Except, it isn't, because after a few minutes of talking, Wilbur can hear the way the man's voice tilts, shifts in tone, and he looks at Phil's wings, looks up, looks at Techno, looks up, then-

He looks at Wilbur.

Phil's voice is still calm, but Wilbur feels anything but, because there's eyes on him, on *him*, on his scales, his fins, and he can feel it linger, and he hopes that it's not because he's being recognized.

He can't even be sure of what the man is saying, or what Phil is saying, because he's regretting coming into town, he's regretting walking into the street, he's going to get caught. They're going to get caught, this was a *mistake*-

But it's not, because Techno squeezes his hand, and Phil gets a room.

Even with the way Wilbur is so sure it's about to go wrong, it doesn't, the man at the counter doesn't say anything, he doesn't yell that he's a monster, they just walk off to a set of stairs, through a hallway to find their room.

It's a small room, with just a single bed in the corner, and Wilbur doesn't relax until the door is closed and locked behind them. Even then, he's still on guard, still hesitant.

But Techno seems confident enough in their safety of where they are, and he lets go of Wilbur's hand to go jump onto the bed. Wilbur blinks, then huffs at the way Techno flops down into the covers. He sorta wants to go join him, but he's more focused on what Phil's doing.

There's a desk by the other corner of the room, and Phil looks through the drawers, seeming to search for something. He pulls the drawers open, and Wilbur looks around the room a little more, feeling relief sink into his bones.

Did they really not get caught? They just- walked in?

It seems too good to be true, and Wilbur was sure that his face was well known, was easily recognizable, but maybe it isn't.

He's not that sure, actually, when he thinks about it. Had there been any wanted posters on the way here?

"Here we are." Phil says, pulling a pair of scissors out from the drawer. "Wilbur?" He asks, and Wilbur goes dead still, his mind coming to a halt with Phil's attention on him.

He's not going to do anything, it's just scissors. He has his voice anyway, he can use it, he'll use it if need be, if Phil takes one step towards him, he can scream and make him get back-

"Do you mind if I give you a haircut?" Phil asks, his voice softer than before, and he gestures with the scissors at his own hair. "Your bangs keep getting into your eyes, and- well, it'd be easier to see, don't you think?" He grins.

Wilbur swallows, his throat feeling dry. He's split between saying yes and no, because yes, yes, he wants his hair to get brushed back, he wants a small braid twisted into his curls, just like Techno, he wants Phil to be just as gentle, just as *kind*, as he was with Techno.

But on the other hand, no, no, there's no chance, because what if he pulls? What if he grabs Wilbur by the hair and drags him, refuses to let go until Wilbur's put somewhere he deems far enough? What if he's not kind at all, and he only reserves the privilege of brushing someone's hair back kindly to Techno?

And Wilbur, his traitorous mouth, even with his internal argument, has words still escape without meaning to, and he stutters out a "Yes."

Technoblade huffs from where he's curled up on the bed, and he looks at Wilbur with a blank face, before smiling, and turning over for a nap. He gives that look to Wilbur, only for a second, or two, and Wilbur's not sure to call it. He feels like Techno is proud.

"Here, come on, you can sit on the desk." Phil beckons, and Wilbur stays in place for a moment, before walking over, and realizing the desk is a bit high for him to climb onto. "Here, come here." Phil puts the scissors to the side, and he holds his hands out, waiting for Wilbur to step closer.

Wilbur does, and he freezes up the second Phil picks him off the ground, lifting him up and putting him onto the desk. He's only in the air for a split second, only for a moment, but it leaves his heart racing, and he swallows back regret. He's got this, he's got this. He said okay, so he's got it. If Phil does anything wrong, he can use his voice and it'll be fine.

Phil brushes the hair out of his eyes, snickering quietly at how Wilbur blinks and shakes his head to try and move his bangs. Wilbur doesn't think he could raise his hands if he wanted to, because they're holding onto the table so tightly, he thinks his nails might actually be scratching the wood.

"How do you *see* with this, mate?" Phil asks, voice light, and Wilbur looks up, looks right at Phil's face. He doesn't mean to make direct eye contact with him, but he does anyway, and Phil's-

Phil's just smiling. There's a strange something in his expression that Wilbur doesn't know what to name, so he's left in confusion, blinking up at Phil, trying to understand what that is. He doesn't know why it throws him off so much, but it does.

“So, plan for today.” Phil says, as if he isn’t being so confusing at the current moment, with the way he looks at Wilbur. “I’m thinking, a bit of shopping at sundown, get you some better clothes, shoes, and maybe a bath too, now that I’m thinking about it.”

Phil holds Wilbur’s hair gently, and there’s a quiet *snip* of the scissors. Wilbur flinches, and Phil just moves even slower, careful. His words sink in, and Wilbur wonders ‘why?’, for any of that.

“Does that sound alright?” Phil asks, and Wilbur looks at Phil’s eyes, and a tiny part of him dares to call that look in his eyes ‘love’. It’s not though. Or at least Wilbur is sure that it can’t be. Right?

He's not sure if he would know.

“Yeah.” Wilbur says, just barely a whisper. “That’s okay.” He lowers his eyes to the ground, but he knows Phil’s face stays the same.

“Okay.” Phil smiles, and there’s another snip of the scissors.

## Chapter End Notes

Phil: \*extreme dad energy\*

Wilbur: \*confused fishkid noises\*

thanks for reading, I am not so sure if this chapter hits right, but ey, you know, I tried :.)

# Trusting carefully

## Chapter Notes

sorta short chapter, whoops :P

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Wilbur thinks this must be the most confusing day of his life.

His head is filled with ‘*why?*’ over and over, and he tries to turn over his thoughts, tries to put himself in Phil’s shoes, but he just can’t grasp it, and he can’t understand what the hell is Phil’s deal.

Because there has to be a deal, right? Wilbur is still half convinced that this entire thing could be a trap, it’s an obvious trap, and yet he still walked right into it, holding onto Techno’s hand. It would be too easy for hunters to barge in right now, for Phil to hand him over and call it a job well done. Wilbur would have nowhere to run. He wouldn’t be fast enough to leave, and while he has his voice, there’s also the threat of Phil pulling the knife Wilbur knows he has and using it onto his throat to keep him from saying anything.

It should be a trap.

But the hands in his hair don’t give off the sense of danger. Phil’s gentle, frighteningly so, and he only ever tugs lightly at his curls to get certain tangles out. He steps around the desk rather than ask Wilbur to move his head, and he leans over beside Wilbur in a way that has to be inconvenient. Wilbur tilts his head down to make it easier, and the action makes his heart slam slam into his ribs, nervous that Phil’s going to use that sliver of vulnerability to his advantage.

It *should* be a trap.

But Phil keeps looking at him with those eyes, something that's too much for Wilbur to handle and to even think about picking apart. He's careful to not let his hands brush across Wilbur's face, his scales, and part of Wilbur is grateful, and part of Wilbur wants to lean forward and push his face into Phil's palms. Would he let Wilbur stay there for a moment? Would Phil let him rest his head in his hands, and not mind?

He's extra cautious around Wilbur's fins, cutting close to them, but not cutting into them. Wilbur's done that before, accidentally snipped at his own fins once. He was trying to chop his hair off, and he didn't have a mirror or anything. It hurt terribly, and even now there's a little divot on his left ear as a remainder of that incident.

Wilbur was quite due for a haircut, if he's being honest. The only reason it gets so long is because he doesn't have anything to cut it with and he doesn't have the time to cut it. He doesn't enjoy it being long, either. Long hair just gives more curls for someone to dig their hand into and pull.

There's been times where Wilbur's been yanked around by the hair, his scalp stinging as he screamed and kicked, and eventually charmed his way out of the hold the hunter would have on him. It would always hurt so bad, and Wilbur remembers how his eyes would well up with tears as he struggled to get free.

His eyes are welling up with tears again, but it's not from pain. There's a swell of something overwhelming in his chest and he doesn't know how to stop it. All he can do is stare at the ground and blink frantically to keep it at bay.

Phil has to lean forward and look over Wilbur's head in order to see the hair that still hangs over the back of his neck, and he shifts so his arms hover at each side of Wilbur, hands reaching behind him to snip away at the curls. Wilbur should probably feel trapped, sitting in between Phil's raised arms, the sleeves brushing at Wilbur's shoulders, but he only feels like leaning forward.

He curses his traitorous mind, his traitorous heart, his stupid, stupid emotions that feel like too much, because Phil is so close and he's not *doing* anything. The only people who have ever been this close to his face, to him, they had never been kind. They weren't gentle, they weren't careful. They were close so they could pick at the scales on his skin, tug at his fins painfully, so they could poke at him and look at him in fascination as if he didn't get angry at their wandering fingers that he would always try to bite off.

A stray thought of trying to bite Phil's fingers off crosses his mind, and he almost laughs right there. Maybe then that would snap Phil out of it, stop whatever the heck is going *on* .

Maybe he's trying to be a hero? Wilbur's met people like that, trying to be good people, helping Wilbur. He appreciates them all, but they never stick around because Wilbur is a magnet for danger. Wilbur attracts hunters at every turn, and it doesn't take much for them to realize this isn't worth the effort and then-

Phil shifts closer, the sound of hair getting snipped off ringing in Wilbur's ears. His sleeve brushes against Wilbur's shoulder again, and Will just tilts his head a bit more down, feeling hair get tugged, then snipped, left short.

Is there a reason Phil wants to help? He said it last night, and those words are burned into his mind, but it doesn't make sense. If he knows the trouble that follows Wilbur, if he knows that Wilbur gets chased on the daily, hunters always after his trail, then why is he so stubborn to help?

What's the reason behind that? Does he feel an obligation? Or is he looking to get a cash prize after he's won Wilbur's trust?

Phil seems to be done with the hair at the back of Wilbur's head, and he leans back, arms retreating so he can lift his hands to Wilbur's face, and work on the bangs instead.

Wilbur makes a mistake and looks up, tilting his head towards Phil and looking right into his eyes. Phil only smiles in response, and Wilbur feels near tears again. He doesn't understand that smile, he only gets scowls or frowns, or if he does get a smile, it's from someone who's happy about finally getting Wilbur underneath a net.

This one is different from any other smile he's seen, it's too genuine for Wilbur to think about it being a trap, and a thought pops into his head, insistent and filled with want.

He wants a hug.

He tries to burn that thought right there, tries to rationalize the reason why he should keep far from Phil's hands, but Phil hasn't done anything wrong, and even now, he's careful, his knuckles barely scraping against Wilbur's forehead as he makes it so hair no longer stays in his face and-

Wilbur has his voice, he realizes. And suddenly that thought of a hug becomes even harder to rationalize against, because everything in him tells him to stop it, and to get away, and everything in him also screams for the chance to see if he'll feel trapped in Phil's arms, or safe.

And it's so selfish, it's so self-indulgent, but Wilbur can't help it, and there's the stubborn feeling of wanting what he wants and not wanting a no, and he's just-

Phil takes his hands away, brushing Wilbur's hair to the side as he hums, satisfied with what he's done and trying to see if there's anything else he can tidy up, and he looks at Wilbur with the same look, the same look that he's had this whole time.

It's like he's promising to never hurt Wilbur without even saying a single word, and Wilbur can't help it, all his caution gets thrown out the window, and he's being stupid but he does not *care*.

So he huffs, quick and frustrated, and Phil pulls his hands away, mouth opening to ask if something's wrong and Wilbur cuts him off, speaking very, very quietly.

"*Give me a hug.*" Wilbur whispers, his words holding an echo that floats into the air, and Phil falters for just a second, before leaning down and wrapping his arms around Wilbur. There's the quiet clink of the scissors being placed down onto the table.

It'll only last a few seconds, Wilbur knows, but that's enough for him. He expects for Phil to pull back the second the charm quickly wears off, he expects for it to be over just as soon as it started, but time drags on.

He pushes his face into Phil's shoulder and stays there, closing his eyes and trying to think, trying to judge. This is a test, he justifies. He's just testing. There's a whisper of panic in his chest, and his heart races with fear, but he feels satisfied, or at least he tells himself that. His hands are trembling under him and tears threaten to spill over, because he knows it won't last, but it's good enough, he's sure of it. It's perfect, it's safe, and he takes a shaky breath in, waiting, and waiting, and-

Phil huffs, sounding amused but not angry. "You could've just asked normally, mate. I would have given one." His voice is quiet, but it feels too loud in Wilbur's ears anyway.

Wilbur opens his eyes, staring wide over Phil's shoulder, and he sees his vision go blurry, blocked with tears. There's a hand resting on his back, a palm up against the back of his head, and Phil's not pulling away.

It's far past since Wilbur's voice has worn off, he knows it doesn't last this long. It would have only lasted until Phil fully wrapped his arms around him, and then it would be done. It's supposed to be done.

But Phil still stays leaned over, still stays close, still holds onto Wilbur and it's just-

He can't hold back the tears in his eyes anymore, and they flow freely down his face, his shoulders shaking as he takes a shaky breath in.

Wilbur tries to pull his thoughts together. He tries to judge, really judge, really see if this is worth the risk. He focuses on the way Phil's hand rests on his back and he tries to trust, he tries to hope.

Technoblade had been confident in Phil. He had been so sure that Phil was good, he was so insistent that Phil stay around and Wilbur thinks he might get it now.

"He fights *for me*." He remembers Techno saying, earnest and believing every word and Wilbur thinks he might get it, he might, there's a chance. "And he wants to fight for *you* too."

Techno's words ring over and over in his head and Wilbur shoves his face into Phil's shoulder, ignoring the way he's leaving a wet spot of tears. Carefully, he raises his hands up to Phil's shirt and digs in his hands into the fabric, holding on.

"Is this okay?" Phil asks, and Wilbur nods, not trusting his voice to waver if he uses it. "Okay."

Wilbur still doesn't really get it. He still doesn't get Phil. But he knows this is something he would like to have, and he knows that this is something that he wants around. Maybe Phil won't be a trick. Maybe, this is just fine, and Phil really is just an idiot who's trying to fight for Wilbur.

Will smiles into Phil's shirt. What a fool. Phil's going to get himself killed, no wonder Techno is insistent on keeping Phil safe.

Wilbur has his voice, and he knows how to use it. He knows Techno must know how to use a sword. Maybe they'll be able to save Phil from his stupid decisions, and then they can have all the hugs safely to themselves.

Yeah, Wilbur likes the sound of that. Maybe he can keep Phil around. It'll only add the challenge of having to fight off hunters even more now, but maybe it's worth it. He can do that.

They stay like that for a long while, a few minutes until Wilbur's calmed down, and Phil steadily rubs a hand against his back.

Wilbur leans back, and Phil lets go immediately, standing up straight and eyeing Wilbur for if he's still upset. Wilbur doesn't pay attention though, he's too busy running his hands through his hair and seeing how short Phil's cut it.

It's not bad, and he doesn't have to push it out of his eyes so much anymore, so he's satisfied.

“What do you think?” Phil asks, brushing some of the hair on the desk into a small pile, reaching behind Wilbur to grab the scissors and put them to the side. “Now you can see.” He grins, and Wilbur huffs.

“How did-” Wilbur hesitates, trying to think of how to place his question. He doesn’t want to linger on that hug, because he feels like he would cry again, so he asks a reasonable concern instead. “How did we get through the town without getting caught? My face is everywhere, I thought we were going to get seen.”

“Confidence is everything, mate.” Phil answers, and he reaches to take Wilbur down from the desk, putting him onto his feet. “As long as you act like you belong, you do. Fake it till you make it. You’d be surprised by how well it works.”

“Hm.” Wilbur frowns, looking past Phil to Techno, who’s still curled up on the bed, maybe asleep. That, or he’s pretending to be asleep. “You said we were going to go shopping.”

Phil nods, brushing all the discarded hair into a pile, putting the scissors back into the drawer.

“I don’t- I don’t want to go back into the town.” He doesn’t want eyes on him again, he doesn’t want the threat of being found out. Maybe Phil is right on the confidence bit, but Wilbur doesn’t have that yet.

“Well,” Phil pauses, thinking for a moment. “How about you two stay in here while I quickly go grab some new clothes for you?”

Techno shoots up from the bed, and oh, he wasn’t asleep. “What?!”

Phil laughs as he turns to Technoblade. “I’ll only be gone for like fifteen minutes, mate. It should be quick, the town isn’t that big.” He turns to Wilbur. “And you two should be fine in here.”

Techno seems unhappy with the idea, but Phil looks at him with a reassuring smile, and he turns his frown to the floor, his expression turning into more of a pout.

“You’ll be alright on your own, yeah?” Phil asks, and Techno waits for a moment, silence stretching on.

“...yeah.” He agrees, sighing quietly. “I guess.”

“Aw, don’t worry, Tech.” Phil grins, walking over to Techno and leaning over the bed, holding a hand to Techno’s cheek and pressing a small kiss to the side of his head. Techno makes a face, but doesn’t protest, his mood significantly improved. “I’ll be right back.”

He turns and walks past Wilbur, ruffling his newly cut hair as he passes. “You two behave, I’ll be as quick as I can, okay?”

“Okay.” Techno grunts out, and he flops back down onto the bed, seeming to actually want to sleep this time.

“Okay.” Wilbur nods, and Phil gives him one last look, one more loving look, then closes the door behind him, fast footsteps going down the hallway.

## Chapter End Notes

eyyyy hugs

Also no Phil's not going to get attacked while going away, he's gonna be fine, the only problem we got is Techno being grumpy that he's gotta be in a room without Phil

thanks for reading

# Brothers

## Chapter Notes

\*cries in short chapter despair\*

I swear the next one is gonna be long chapter, I SWEAR

okay, enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

There's a split second where Wilbur's mind thinks of Phil coming back with hunters, rather than clothes like he said. It's easy enough to push the bad thought away, although it doesn't stop the slight uneasiness that creeps up into his throat. He pushes that down too, tries to stay the comfort that Phil's created, something warm and kind.

Wilbur wraps his arms around himself, staring at the door for a moment.

Now's their chance, his mind supplies. If he there's any good moment to run and take Techno with him, now's his best shot, they could be far from town before Phil even knows it. Phil is a danger, he's something unknown entirely, and Wilbur *still* isn't even sure if Phil is going to provide some safety or give him to the wolves.

He doesn't really move, and he's less surprised than he thought he'd be when he realizes he's not that compelled to get away. He feels like smacking himself in the head for not being able to make up his mind, whether to stay or to run, he *knows* the logical choice. And he also knows the choice that he wants, even if it doesn't make sense. He hates the fact they're both different choices.

Wilbur's not sure if he would even get far, now that he thinks about it. The feeling of fear and hyper-awareness is gone, and it's replaced with a heavy exhaustion that makes Wilbur want to sit down and just wait until Phil comes back. He nearly considers it for a moment, staring at the floor underneath his bare feet.

Tearing his eyes away from the floor, Wilbur turns to look at Techno, who's sprawled out on the bed, face shoved into the sheets. He's not snoring, but Wilbur's still not entirely sure if he's awake.

"Techno." Wilbur whispers, and he rubs at his own arms, as if he's trying to warm up.  
"Technoblade."

There's a grunt in response, and Techno doesn't move. Wilbur frowns, walking carefully and quietly, making his way to the side of the bed. He can't see Techno's face, since it's smushed into the blankets, but he can see his hair, perfectly on display.

Bright pink, mostly clean and well tended to. Pulled back into a ponytail with a little braid at the side of his head. Wilbur holds a hand out, and it hovers, then he realizes what he's doing and he yanks it back so fast he practically hits himself on the chest.

"Techno." He leans closer. "Technoblade."

"What." Techno responds, but it's muffled. Tired, probably. Wilbur would feel sorry, but he's on a mission for their greater good.

"Phil's gone. Now's our chance."

Techno turns his head, lifting himself up and squinting blearily at Wilbur for a moment.  
"Nice haircut." He compliments, genuine in every way.

Wilbur huffs, smiling. "Thanks. Come on."

"To where?" Techno yawns, and he doesn't move an inch, even when Wilbur grabs lightly at his arm and tugs. "Phil said to stay here."

“If we run now, we can make a good distance before he realizes we’re gone.” Wilbur explains, and he hopes that his words will convince Techno to lead the way. Wilbur’s not even fully convinced himself. “We can go and follow the river, stay away from the hunters. I’m good at running.”

Techno blinks, slowly, like he’s not quite awake, and Wilbur feels the urge to grab a pillow and smack him over the head.

“Hmmm- nope.” Techno says easily, and he turns over, laying on his back and closing his eyes, as if that ends the conversation right there. Wilbur sputters, climbing onto the bed to sit beside him.

“Technoblade.” Wilbur says again, hitting Techno in the arm.

“Yeah?” He opens one eye.

“We- we have to-” Wilbur waves his hands, stammering and trying to think of how to even form a proper explanation to Techno. “The hunters- we’re going to get caught!”

“No,” Techno hums. “We’re not. And I don’t wanna leave Phil.” He opens his eyes to side-eye Wilbur with a grin. “And I think you don’t want to either.”

“I don’t *like* him.” Wilbur insists, and he ignores the way his face turns warm when Technoblade snorts. “He can’t be trusted, he could be getting hunters right now!”

“You *hugged* him.”

Wilbur flushes, because no, no, Techno was asleep, he did not *see* that. “I was testing him!”

“Sure.” Techno waves his hand up, grinning even wider at how Wilbur fumes.

“*Stop-*” Wilbur grabs a pillow off the bed, brings it down over Techno’s face. “Stop making that face!”

“What face-? Hey!” Techno bats the pillow away, laughing lightly. “You can stop being all ‘oh I hate Phil, Phil is so evil’ now.” He talks in an exaggerated tone, poking fun.

“Maybe he *is* evil-”

“He’s the best.” Techno counters, and he sounds like he believes it wholeheartedly, like all of Wilbur’s concerns are simply nothing to worry about.

“But-” Wilbur stammers, Technoblade sighing out in a deep breath, humming again and closing his eyes. “But, but, you don’t even know- Do you even *understand* him?”

Techno makes a face, nose scrunching up. “What’s there to understand?”

“Everything!” Wilbur throws his arms up. “Nothing he does makes sense, don’t you have questions? Why would he try and fight for you and me when he knows there’s a bunch of people trying to kill us!?”

It doesn’t make sense, it really doesn’t. What’s the point of it? Why would Phil do that? Wilbur wouldn’t go through with that much effort, why does Phil?

“Phil’s my dad.” Techno mutters out, keeping his eyes closed as if he’s trying to take a nap. His words make Wilbur freeze. “All I’ve ever known is him, and he’s kept me safe. That’s all I need.”

“...what?” Wilbur chokes out, staring wide at Techno’s face.

“I guess it’s kinda confusing, actually, when you think about it.” Techno continues.  
“Everyone else sucks, because they all believe in some stupid prophecy. Phil doesn’t, though. He’s the only good one.”

“Prophecy?” Wilbur repeats, holding his hands close to his chest. “What- What prophecy?”

Techno opens his eyes then, turning his head to look at Wilbur. “Why do you think people chase you all the time?”

Wilbur’s mouth feels dry. “Because I’m a monster?”

Technoblade just snorts. “I guess. Maybe that’s part of it, I dunno. But, uh.” Techno goes to sit up, scooting so he’s facing Wilbur, his legs crossed in front of him. “Phil said there’s this prophecy thing. Everyone’s heard about it, rumors and stuff. Apparently, you, me, and some other kid is supposed to grow up and be strong enough to end the world.”

Wilbur blinks. Stares.

“...what.” He deadpans, because *what*.

No, he’s chased because he’s different, because of his fins, the scales on his face. That’s why, right? That’s the reason. Or, is it really because of this?

Wilbur tries to think, tries to remember past experiences with the new added context, and he’s just- confused.

“Oh, yeah, it’s stupid.” Techno nods, sighing. “Maybe it’s true though? I feel like I know you.”

“You also have that?” Wilbur asks, snapping his head up to study Techno’s expression. “Like- that feeling that we’re supposed to be together?”

“Mhm.” Techno shrugs, and he holds a hand up, palm facing towards Wilbur. Wilbur hesitates for just a second, then holds up his hand and presses it against Techno’s. “It’s weird. We’re not the same in any way, but-”

“We are.” Wilbur insists, frowning. “We’re both monsters, aren’t we?”

“I mean, yeah.” Techno nods, pushing against Wilbur’s hand. “But there’s a lot of monsters in the world. I read a book on this once...Did you know that there’s hundreds of different types of people that are kinda like monsters?”

“I’ve seen a few.” Wilbur admits. A man with ears on his head that reminded him of a fox, his eyes too bright. A person whose skin glowed, like it was meant to burn. He’s only seen them in passing, hidden in crowds. He’s not the type to actually walk up and greet them, because he’s always on the move, but he’s always been curious. He’s seen them.

“Yeah, so have I. Not common, but still.” Techno hums, silent for a moment. “We’re not the only ones, but people think we’re the most *dangerous* ones. Or something.”

Wilbur bites at the inside of his cheek, feeling conflicted. “If we’re supposed to destroy the world, or whatever, then why is Phil trying to help us?” Wilbur asks. “Why’s he your *dad*?”

“Because he loves me.” Techno answers smoothly, not a hint of disbelief in his response. “And he knows that the prophecy, or all the rumors, it’s stupid.”

“It’s bullshit, for sure.” Wilbur swears, Techno huffing with a smile. “I don’t want to burn the world or anything, I just want to be left alone. I just-” Wilbur falters, making a face and pressing his lip tightly shut. “I just want Phil’s hugs.”

“Oh, man, same.” Techno agrees, curling his hand into a fist and pushing his knuckles into Wilbur’s palm, Wilbur squeezing his hand. “You know, since he’s my dad, he should be your dad too.”

Wilbur rolls his eyes. “Yeah, right.”

“Hey!” Techno huffs, reaching for the pillow beside him, Wilbur ducking as he swings it. “I mean it. I feel like I know you, and I don’t want you to leave.”

Wilbur holds onto the end of the pillow, Techno letting him pull it out of his hands. “Exactly. So we can stay together, right?”

“Yeah, but I’m not leaving Phil either.” Techno declares, and Wilbur makes an unimpressed face in response. “I mean it! Phil’s the only good one, he’s everything I’ve ever known. And he’s trying to protect us while everyone else is dumb and thinks we’re bad. He’s my dad, he’s fighting for me, he’s fighting for you, so he’s your dad too.”

“He’s not going to *love* me, though.” Wilbur huffs, pushing the pillow into Techno’s face, scooting back as Techno makes a noise of protest. “Why would he?”

“Why would he love *me*?” Techno hugs the pillow in his arms, pointing a finger to himself. “Maybe he doesn’t need a reason.”

Wilbur still isn’t convinced. He’s also not sure if that’s something he wants. He’s never had that for himself, something that could be called love. But with Phil, maybe. With Phil, it could be a possibility. It’s sure nicer than anything else he’s been offered.

“When did you meet Phil?” Wilbur asks, curious. Did Techno get hunted before? Did Phil really know the threat of keeping him around, before?

“I was really little.” Techno hums. “I don’t remember much.” He admits, and he sounds conflicted over it, like he’s not sure he wants to remember what happened before Phil.

Wilbur holds a hand out, and Techno gives his hand willingly, without complaint. Wilbur keeps a light grip, and Techno doesn't pull away.

"What... *do* you remember?" Wilbur asks, staring at their two hands. "From before Phil?"

Techno frowns, eyebrows furrowing in thought as he flips the question over in his head.

"I remember..." Techno trails off, thinking. "People, from the village I was in. Phil found me in the nether, in a small, small town. They were scared of me." He remembers Phil pulling him out from that little hole, remembers how soft his gold hair had been in his hands, remembers-

"People are always scared of me." Wilbur confesses. "They always look at me like I'll tear their throat out. That, or they look at me as if I'm just a bad thought."

"Does Phil look at you like that?" Techno asks, and Wilbur tilts his gaze down, looking nearly frustrated.

"He looks at me..." Wilbur takes a sharp breath in, trying to say the words. "Like..." *Like he loves me*, he wants to say.

He can't say it.

Techno hums in agreement anyway, because he knows what he means.

"I dunno if Phil can be my dad." Wilbur says quietly, squeezing Techno's hand in his own. He doesn't know if he can do that. He knows he wants to, how could he not? He knows he feels jealous at the idea of Techno having that, having Phil be kind all the time, having Phil's love for himself. He knows he wants the same.

But he doesn't want to lose it.

“But can you be my brother?” Wilbur asks, lifting his head. “Then, maybe later, Phil can be my dad.”

Techno thinks is over for a moment, nodding, seeming satisfied. “Yeah. Yeah, then- then we can always be together, right?”

*Family*, a small part of Wilbur’s mind whispers. Wilbur’s heart jumps at the opportunity, head first into the chance of having that. He doesn’t know with Phil, he can’t be sure with Phil, but Technoblade, it’s different.

With Techno, it feels like Wilbur is meant to be at his side, and Techno is supposed to be at his. That seems right.

Wilbur nods, smiling. Techno gives a matching smile.

“I’ve never had a brother.” Wilbur says. “I’m not sure how to do that.”

“I mean, I’ve never had one either.” Techno shrugs. “So I guess we both don’t know what we’re doing.”

Wilbur thinks back to what Techno’s said, about the prophecy. “What about the third kid? Is Phil also looking for that one?”

Techno nods. “He wants to find them really soon, so nothing happens. He thinks they might still be a baby right now.”

Another brother? Or sister? More family, Wilbur thinks. If the other kid has the same pull that Techno has, has the same feeling, then Wilbur wants to meet them. Maybe then he’ll have another person at his side. Maybe then, he’s not going to have to worry about anyone leaving.

“Phil’s weird.” Wilbur grins. Techno snorts. “Do you think he’s going to be mad at us being brothers?”

“Nah.” Techno waves the concern off. “He won’t.”

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Phil comes back to the room about twenty-five minutes later, a new pile of clothes in hand. He took a bit longer than he wanted to, but he’s at least got better clothes that he’s sure will fit Wilbur. He’s got new clothes for Techno too, so they both have something new for the road. He wouldn’t want Techno feeling left out.

He opens the door with a slight fear in his chest, worries at the back of his head at not finding his boys on the other side. But he doesn’t have to worry, because they’re in the room, and they’re safe and sound.

It’s quiet, which makes Phil slow down and step lightly, and he closes the door behind him with a soft click as he scans the room for Wilbur and Techno. He finds them on the bed, and his first assumption is that they must’ve dozed off.

He puts the newly bought clothes down on the desk, walking over to the bed to get a better look, and he struggles to not die on the spot.

They’re asleep, alright. Curled up next to each other, Techno’s shoes kicked off, the two of them barefoot. They’re both laying on their sides towards each other, and they’re holding hands in their sleep, their heads nearly touching with how close they are.

There’s a pillow on the ground beside the bed, and Phil takes it, shoving his face into it and turning away from the sight before him, smiling so hard. He takes careful steps away, letting them both get their rest. They probably need the nap.

## Chapter End Notes

I like to think that in this world, no matter what happened, Wilbur, Techno, and Tommy were always meant to meet, in some sort of way. Destiny, or whatever. They be connected

anyhow, hope that was fun to read, it was fun to write, now I can sleep

goodnite and also thanks for reading

# Family, maybe

## Chapter Notes

oh geez, long chapter time :,)

content warning for animal death near the end part. It's just a mention, but I thought I ought warn anyway.

Stay safe, enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It takes a bit for Phil to get himself together.

It's just precious, he can't help it, the two of them look so at peace while sleeping soundly, and Phil has to take a moment to be so, so thankful that everything has gone right. There's been a few hiccups, sure, but right now everything's gone right, and Wilbur and Techno are safe under his watch. He makes a promise, yet another one, maybe the hundredth one at this point, a promise to protect the two of them with his life.

At this point, the universe must be sick of his promises, but he will continue to make them. How could he not, with the sight before him? It's moments like these that make him wonder how such kids could be tied to such cruel fates. If only people saw them like this, rather than how their scared mind shows them. If only they were seen as the children they actually are, rather than the monsters they have the potential to be.

With the two of them asleep, Phil takes the opportunity to slip out of the room again, leaving the two boys sleeping with a newly-placed blanket over their shoulders. It's been some time since morning, so he assumes now's the best time to go buy some food. Today can be a rest day, of a sorts. He's sure that the kids wouldn't mind just laying around all day rather than planning the next place to go off to. They need a rest.

The shop owner that sells him his food gives him a strange look, squints at his wings in a way that isn't just curious, but nearly judgemental. Phil's smile goes sharp as he hands over a handful of coins to pay, and the shop owner stops looking after that. He's given three sandwiches that are all well-wrapped, and a small container of bright red strawberries.

He buys a container of water to take with the food, and travels back to the inn, walking quickly and confidently, like he's meant to be striding through the streets. No one pays him any mind, but there's the few glances here and there, as there always is at a man with wings. They don't seem to have anything sinister with the looks though, just pure curiosity, so Phil doesn't worry.

Part of him is still wary, since he knows rumors have to have spread at this point of him having Technoblade, but he's not getting scared reactions, so it must be fine. He still has time, this town being unaware.

When he gets back to the room, Techno and Wilbur are still knocked out, but they've moved in their sleep and kicked off the blanket, Wilbur using Techno as a pillow. Phil smiles at the sight, and goes to put the food down on the desk beside the clothes. Food, then bath, then new clothes seems like a good plan.

But first he's got to wake them up.

He almost doesn't want to, leaning over the bed and holding his hands to his mouth, smiling furiously underneath his fingertips. They're sleeping so soundly, and this is a rare sight of seeing Wilbur so calm and content. But it's been a while since breakfast, and they both oughta eat.

"Boys." Phil says gently, whispering too low. He huffs, trying to will away the warm feeling in his chest. "Tech, Wilbur." He says again, reaching down and shaking Techno by the shoulder gently. "Come on, wake up. You're both sleeping the day away."

Techno stirs first, making a face showing he's woken up, but he only grumbles something and turns his face to shove his nose into Wilbur's hair. Wilbur actually opens his eyes, blinking slowly and peering over Techno's shoulder to look up at Phil.

“Up, up, come on.” Phil urges, poking Techno in the back. “I got some food for you two.”

“Hm?” Wilbur hums, blinking again, and Phil can see the realization set in, his eyes going wide as he finally processes Phil’s face. He jerks, scooting away from Technoblade, who makes a sound of protest, face-planting into the bed when Wilbur is no longer an option to hide his face in.

“I was *sleeping*.” Techno says into the sheets, Phil snickering at how annoyed he sounds. Wilbur sits up rather quickly, staring down at Techno for a second, then looking up at Phil with a wary face.

“Good morning.” Phil greets, and Wilbur doesn’t say anything back, Phil not minding. “I went and bought some sandwiches.” He calls out, walking away to retrieve the sandwiches from the desk, pulling open the lid from the container of strawberries. “I think it's grilled cheese, but I’m not sure. I also got some-”

“Berries!” Wilbur blurts out, seeing the fruit in Phil’s hand. “Uh-” He slaps his hands over his mouth, looking up at Phil like he hadn’t meant to say that.

“Here.” Phil grins, putting down the strawberries in front of Wilbur on the bed, and holding out the sandwich to him. He doesn’t take it at first, only staring at the strawberries next to him, but then he eventually notices what Phil’s holding out, and he takes it from him, lighting quick, practically yanking it out of Phil’s fingers.

Techno is awake by then, finally sitting up and yawning, pushing his hair back out of his face. His ponytail is a bit too loose by now, and Phil brings the other sandwich, giving it to Techno, then sitting down behind him on the bed to pull his hair out of a ponytail to fix it. He has to tug a bit at the hair tie, but Techno doesn’t mind, instead he just picks at the sandwich in his hands, making a face, before finally chomping down on it, paying no mind to Phil behind him.

Wilbur hasn’t taken a bite yet, and he instead stares at Phil with a strange expression. It’s not wary, or hostile, but instead nearly sad, and when Phil lifts his eyes up at Wilbur, he looks away quickly, turning his head to the strawberries in front of him.

Phil hums, filing away the reaction for later.

He ties back Techno's hair into a neat braid, before realizing at the end of it that there wasn't much of a point if he was going to send them off for a bath after eating.

Oh well. He can always re-braid it.

Techno and Wilbur eat quietly, Wilbur sparing quick glances towards Phil each time he reaches for a strawberry. He acts as if Phil's about to swipe the food away from him, and Phil does no such thing. He instead just stands up from the bed after he's done with Techno's hair, and he goes to give them water, then goes to eat his own food by the desk, leaving them to eat in peace.

It's not much, if he's still in the same room, but Wilbur seems to trust that, at least, and he continues to finish his food, sharing the strawberries with Techno, occasionally taking a swig of water.

It's after a few minutes, with Wilbur already done with his sandwich and picking at a strawberry, when the calm silence is broken.

"Me and Techno were talking while you were gone." Wilbur says, chin high like he's daring Phil to question him.

"Yeah?" Phil raises his eyebrows, amused. "What'd you two talk about?"

"Is there really a prophecy like Techno said?" Wilbur asks, leaning forward a bit, his face dropping into a small frown. "People think we're going to kill everyone?"

Phil sucks in a breath through his teeth, sighing quietly. There's a tinge of annoyance at Wilbur's words, but it's not for Wilbur, rather for the fact that such a prophecy is even a thing. He doesn't want to say the truth, wants to tell Wilbur; no of course not. You're safe and

everything is alright, you don't need to worry, he wants to say. But that would be a lie, and he doesn't think Wilbur or Techno would appreciate something so obviously untrue.

"Yes." Phil says instead, smiling sadly. "There had been stories when Techno was born, from priests and sorcerers, and people all over the lands. It's why I rushed to get Techno when he was young, because people were trying to hurt him. It's why I've been looking for you, too."

"What was the story?" Wilbur asks, sitting up straight. "The stories?"

Phil grimaces. "It's not true, any of it." He reassures, because he knows it's not. It's a bullshit prophecy, and Phil thinks it should die with time.

"But I still wanna know. I wanna know why people have been *chasing* me." Wilbur frowns, eyes determined. Techno stares up at Phil while nibbling on a strawberry, and Phil's held in place under their stares.

"Alright." Phil puts his food to the side, leaning against the desk. "I'll give the simple version, because that's just what I remember." Wilbur seems satisfied with that, and he leans back, looking at Techno with a tiny nod.

"From what magic-users all over have been hearing, there are supposed to be three monsters born that are destined to cause destruction and despair. They're meant to have unimaginable powers, strength and magic to their advantage. They'll be capable of incredible things, and be capable of leveling towns into nothing. If they're left to grow, they'll be too strong for anyone to stop them. If they're left to reach adulthood, then they will turn their powers onto the world, and everything will be lost."

Three monsters meant to leave the lands in fire and ruin, nothing left left behind. There are supposed to be two of those monsters in front of Phil right now. But he sees nothing that the story tells. He just sees two kids who were born with unusually strong magic, and horrid luck.

He just sees his kids.

“Of course, that’s not actually true.” Phil reassures, as soon as he’s done with the quick story. “That’s just a prophecy, it doesn’t mean you have no choice but to follow it. A lot of the time those stories are wrong, anyway.”

“But everyone believes it.” Wilbur mutters out, sighing as he turns his head to the side. “It doesn’t matter if it’s true or not, everyone believes it. No wonder they want to kill me.”

“Wilbur.” Phil says, standing up from where he’s leaning on the desk.

“Everyone is dumb.” Techno adds in, head tilted down as he twists at the leaves of a strawberry with his fingers. “They’re all stupid, it doesn’t matter. When we find the last monster, then we can go hide somewhere with Phil and ignore all of them. Then the prophecy is their problem, not ours.” He looks up at Wilbur. “Then we can just be together, right? It won’t matter then.”

Wilbur blinks, a startled laugh coming out of him. “Y-yeah, you’re right. You’re right.”

Techno blinks back, biting into another strawberry, then smiling. “Duh.”

Phil huffs, smiling as he crosses his arms, Technoblade offers the last strawberry to Wilbur, who snatches it with a grin.

They finish the last of the food and throw the trash away, Phil convincing them both to take a proper bath. It costs a bit at the front counter for Phil to even get use of the baths, (which feels like a scam, really, didn’t he already pay for the room?) but it’s worth it to see the way Wilbur’s hair fluffs up after being dried with a towel and to have the dirt scrubbed off Techno’s hands.

He gives them the newly bought clothes after, glad to finally be rid of what Wilbur had been wearing. He quietly gets rid of those rags by throwing them into the fireplace by the main room of the inn as he passes.

Techno's given a clean white button-up shirt, which he can tuck into his pants so it's easier to attach the thin sword he carries on his belt. Phil gives a short black hooded cape that's lined with wool on the inside, and Techno takes it like it's made of gold. It'll keep him warm, and keep him hidden, and that's all that Phil needs.

For Wilbur, Phil had gotten a simple yellow sweater, clean and soft, something that he'd thought Wilbur would appreciate. When he pulls it over his head, Wilbur blinks at it like he doesn't know what to think, and he eventually deems it good enough. Phil had bought a small beanie as well, something to hide his fins so he wouldn't have to be so wary when they went through town. Wilbur hadn't been exactly overjoyed at that one, but he still took the beanie anyway without much complaint, seeming to consider the benefit of stealth.

Now socks, Wilbur seemed to like that one. He seemed to enjoy the feeling of something soft on his feet, and Techno was glad to share matching socks with someone who appreciated it.

Although, as for the shoes.

"I'm not wearing those." Wilbur declared, feet hanging over the edge of the bed, as Phil sat on the ground in front of him, holding up a pair of shoes.

"Guess I'm not wearing any shoes, too." Techno agrees, laying down on his back behind Wilbur with a grin. "Just so it's fair."

"You both have to wear shoes, Techno." Phil sighs, smiling. Maybe not right now, as the sun sets outside and they're resting in the safety of the inn, but they will have to when they do travel.

"I don't have to do anything." Wilbur crosses his arms. "I will walk barefoot through the forest and eat bugs and you can't do anything about it."

"You eat *what*?" Phil asks.

“Ew.” Techno scrunches his nose at the thought of eating bugs.

Phil laughs under his breath, Wilbur kicking his legs absent-mindedly as he turns around to chat quietly with Techno over how certain bugs were actually not that bad, and no, stop making that face, they were fine-!

“It's alright, you don't really have to put them on until morning, anyway.” Phil puts the shoes to the side, taking Techno's boots too and putting them beside Wilbur's. “I'm going to ask around in the morning for some directions to a church, maybe, and we can see where we'll go from there.

“I'm not wearing shoes.” Wilbur rolls over onto the bed, rubbing his head into the sheets and trying to get rid of the last bit of dampness sticking to his curls.

“Neither am I.” Techno agrees.

Phil rolls his eyes. “We'll see. Techno, could you sit up for a minute? Let me fix your hair.”

Techno makes a noise that seems like a yes, and he drags himself up to the edge of the bed, crossing his legs in front of him. Phil sits down beside him to pull his hair back and brush through it with his fingers. He wishes he had a proper brush, but this'll have to do, and it's not like Techno's hair is terribly tangled anyway, it's easy to manage after it's just been washed.

He carefully tugs any bad tangles out and splits it into three parts, twisting it into a neat braid that reaches mid-way down Techno's back. It would be easier to just put it into a ponytail, but Techno's told him before that he likes it when Phil braids his hair, and Phil will admit that he finds it calming, too.

As he's tying up the end of it, only then does he realise Wilbur's staring again, the same face that looks like he's lost in thought, almost sad.

He pats at Techno's shoulder when he's done, turning his head to Will. "Want me to do your hair?" He points the question at him, and even with that, Wilbur jerks back, glancing around as if Phil might be speaking to some non-existent third person in the room.

"My hair?" Wilbur repeats, blinking as he raises his hands up to his curls, tugging at them lightly.

"Yeah, mate." Phil leans back on his palms, Techno crawling away to make his way around Wilbur on the bed.

"I-" Wilbur hesitates. He wants to, but he doesn't. He wants that same treatment Techno gets, but he doesn't know if he should try to have it. "I dunno-"

"Scoot." Techno cuts him off, and he kicks his feet into Wilbur's back, Wilbur falling forward towards Phil, face planting onto the bed. Techno doesn't seem to have an ounce of remorse, and he only curls up in the spot where Wilbur was sitting, Wilbur looking back at him with a glare.

"Techno." Phil lightly scolds, Technoblade paying him no mind. "Here, Wilbur, you can sit in front of me."

"But my hair isn't long." Wilbur protests, scooting up to sit in front of Phil anyway. His hands are trembling when he goes to face his back towards Phil, and Phil wisely doesn't mention it.

"I can work with that." Phil grins, reaching up behind Wilbur and ruffling his hair for a moment. Wilbur huffs, tilting his head back into Phil's hands, and huffing again when Phil pulls his hands away. He seems to falter for a bit, then decides on something and just fully leans back, right into Phil.

He stares up at Phil's face, a frown set in his expression, but it wavers at the edges, and Phil feels like Wilbur isn't as upset as he's looking. He's scared, no doubt, he's shaking even now,

leaning back against Phil, but it's like he's daring Phil to try and attack him, right here and right now.

"Hello, mate." Phil grins, leaning down and nudging his chin into Wilbur's hairline. Wilbur startles at Phil's arms moving beside him, but he doesn't scoot away.

"Hi." Wilbur responds, narrowing his eyes as if he's trying to become angry, but it just looks like he's squinting, in need of glasses.

Phil just smiles. Even with the attempt at a grumpy face, Wilbur seems content, and Phil's glad for it. "Here, sit up." He lets Wilbur sit up properly, then tries to see what he has to work with. He had cut Wilbur's hair shorter, true, but not so short to where there's nothing to do with it.

There's still plenty of loose curls that can be braided back, and Phil does just that, brushing his fingers through the hair to untangle it, then making a small thin braid at the side of Wilbur's head. He repeats it on the other side, making something almost like a crown, woven into his roots, and there's just enough hair to where Phil can pull it back and make a tiny little ponytail, connecting the two braids.

He thinks it's cute. He's finishing it up and checking for any stray hair when he glances over to Technoblade, faltering at finding him fast asleep, snoring quietly. He's sprawled out on the bed once more, his feet kicking at the pillows, an arm stretched out towards Wilbur, who-

Who's holding his hand.

Phil adjusts the hair tie at the back of Wilbur's head, not being able to stop the smile that breaks out across his face. "All done." He says quietly, and Wilbur whips his head towards Phil, reaching a free hand up to immediately poke at what he's done. He looks a mix of both disappointed and happy, face shifting back and forth like he can't decide on what to think.

"Oh." Is all Wilbur has to say, and he blinks slowly as he runs his fingers over the small braids, face shifting into something unreadable entirely. He turns his head down to the floor. "T-thank you."

“Mm-hm. Don’t worry about it.” Phil stands up from the bed, hearing the frame creak a little bit from his weight moving off, and he stretches his arms up with a groan. “Alright. Techno’s already knocked out, and it’s well past sundown by now, you want to sleep too?”

Wilbur doesn’t respond, his gaze turned towards the wooden floor.

“Wil?” Phil asks.

“Huh?” Wilbur looks up, voice wavering, and- oh.

He’s blinking back tears, his shoulders curled in as he holds onto Techno’s hand tightly.

“Sorry, sorry-” Wilbur shakes his head, looking down again to Techno’s hand instead.

“No, Wilbur, it’s fine-” Phil reassures, leaning forward, reaching an arm out. “Here, come here.”

Phil reaches down, wrapping an arm around Wilbur and staying like that for a moment, a half-hug, before doing what he meant to do and wrapping an arm around Wilbur’s torso, and the other arm around Techno’s. He carefully moves them both more onto the bed, Techno stirring as he’s moved, but not opening his eyes.

“Dad, ‘m *sleeping*.” Techno mumbles out, making a face when Wilbur’s hand is no longer in his.

“I’m just moving you, Tech, Wilbur needs to lay down too.” Phil responds, and Techno sighs, rolling over on his side and drifting off to sleep again.

Phil goes to let Wilbur lay down, only to find that Wilbur's latched onto his arm and won't let go. He's not looking towards Phil, instead staring at Techno, his fists curled up in Phil's sleeve.

"Wil?" Phil asks, and Wilbur looks towards him, looking even more near tears. "Hey. Hey, what's wrong?"

Wilbur just shakes his head, holding his other arm up, looking scared and hesitant.

Phil kneels down onto the bed, swooping him up into a hug. "It's alright." Phil whispers, Wilbur sniffing. "It's alright, now."

"I don't-" Wilbur chokes out, a quiet sob racking through him. "I don't-"

"What?"

Wilbur huffs, taking a deep breath in, before speaking again, his voice shaky. "I don't wanna lose this." He confesses, barely a whisper, holding onto Phil, trying to lean into him, holding onto him tightly.

"We're not going anywhere, Wilbur. Techno's right here, I'm right here. I'll be right here while you both sleep, okay?"

Wilbur shakes his head, and he reaches his hand up, grabbing onto the collar of Phil's shirt as he looks up. "You can't leave." Wilbur pleads. "This is better than anything I've ever gotten, *please*, don't leave."

"I'm not going anywhere." Phil promises, and Wilbur shakes his head again. "I won't leave while you're both asleep, I'll be right here, okay?"

“You- You can’t leave me.” Wilbur says again. “You won’t abandon us.” He says, and his eyes light up with something, tears flowing down his face as he stammers out words again, but they hold an echo, his tone desperate and sweet. “*You can’t abandon us.*”

“I would never.” Phil hugs Wilbur tight, hardly acknowledging the attempt at a charm. Phil doesn’t know if that worked or not, but it’s not like he needs it. Charmed or not, Phil wouldn’t ever do that. “I will never, I swear, Wilbur.”

“I just don’t- I’ve never had a brother before.” Wilbur says quietly, like he’s afraid Phil’s going to make fun of him for it. “I’ve never had a dad before. There’s always people who say they’ll be by my side, but they always go.”

“Wil.”

“I just want to keep this one.” Wilbur is mumbling, now, face pressed into Phil’s chest, and it’s not like he’s talking to Phil anymore, but rather to everything else. It’s as if he’s pleading with the universe, and all Phil can do is hold him. “Just this one, just this once. Just stay.”

Phil feels moments from choking up, and he pushes the feeling back, instead just holding Wilbur even tighter, rubbing a hand up and down his back. A minute passes, then two, and Wilbur’s cries have simmered down, but not stopped entirely.

“Wilbur?” Techno’s woken up, now, and he’s sitting up with panic written all over his face, blinking out the drowsiness the second he realizes what’s going on. “Dad, what’s wrong?”

“No one’s hurt, it’s okay.” Phil reassures, and after a moment of hesitation, he scoots to sit properly on the bed against the headboard, holding an arm out to Techno. “Come here.”

Techno’s moving over within a second, and he gives Phil some sort of hug, but is more focused on leaning in towards Wilbur, knocking his head against his. Phil scoots back on the mattress, resigns himself to having to be the pillow for the two of them, and his wings wrap around them both, hiding them away against his chest.

“Did you get hurt?” He can barely hear Techno whisper, him and Wilbur talking gently to where they’re both curled up in Phil’s lap.

“No.” Wilbur snuffles, and Techno leans his head against Wil’s. “I’m okay.”

“Okay.” Techno nods, and he reaches out for Wilbur’s hand, Wilbur grabbing on.

Phil sighs, leaning his head down and resting his chin onto both their heads, his wings wrapping even tighter around them both. They sit in silence, Phil holding each with one arm, feeling Wilbur’s breaths slow down into something calm. Techno seems to fight back against drifting off again, determined to have Wilbur be the first to sleep. It’s almost funny, the two of them waiting for the other to rest, failing miserably with Phil humming quietly over their heads.

They’re both practically asleep when Phil speaks again, and he speaks very, very low, words for their ears only.

“You’re both my sons.” Phil says, and he hears Wilbur’s breath hitch, Technoblade pressing his face into Phil’s shirt. “Nothing will ever change that, and I will never leave either of you behind.”

He means every word. Even if this entire plan goes sideways, even if the prophecy is true, and the kids in his arms grow up to have a unimaginable amount of blood on their hands, Phil will always see them as his kids. He’s too far in to not think of them in any other way.

Maybe they were always meant to be under Phil’s watch. Phil thinks of his own past, his own rumors and tales that swirled over his head when he was younger, and he smiles with the bitter taste of irony in his mouth.

Techno and Wilbur fall asleep like that, held close in Phil’s arms, and Phil doesn’t sleep at all. He stays awake, thinking and thinking, and easily putting off his rest.

The necklace tucked away underneath his shirt glows a dim red.

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Phil wakes them up a bit early in the morning, and he's greeted with grumpy faces and Wilbur acting like a sack of potatoes, limp and heavy, and demanding that he gets more rest. He seems to enjoy being under Phil's wings, and he keeps trying to stay underneath the feathers, even though Phil keeps moving his wings away.

It takes a bit, but Phil's able to drag them onto their feet, then wrangle them to wear some actual shoes. Techno is just disappointed that he doesn't get to go without shoes again, Wilbur is outright offended that he has to have something on his feet.

"Would you rather step on something sharp and cut your foot, mate?" Phil asks, tying the laces on Wilbur's shoes as he sits on the bed before Phil.

"Yes." Wilbur frowns, and Techno lets out a snort.

They leave the inn room, saying goodbye to the nice shelter it provided for the night, and they set off on their way to start travel, with a new goal. The man at the front counter gives Phil a deep frown when they walk past, and Phil responds with a passive-aggressive smile, holding Wilbur and Techno by the hand as they walk out the door.

The atmosphere of the town has shifted into something Phil doesn't like, and he holds Wilbur and Techno a bit closer as they stand out in the street, looking around.

"So, we're looking for a church?" Wilbur asks, tilting his head as he scans the buildings around him. He tugs at the beanie over his head, making a face since he's not yet comfortable with it.

"A priest. Or someone who has like, magic." Techno elaborates, looking up at Phil. "Phil?"

He asks Phil for the intention of Phil telling them where to walk next, but Phil is more busy with noticing how the people are looking at them. They seem wary, more so than yesterday, and with the hood over Techno's head and the hat on Wilbur's ears, they shouldn't be getting any looks. The image should just be a dad holding his two kids close, but they look at him as if it's something more sinister than that.

There's a group of people at the end of the road, and they spot Phil with attentive faces, making their way over in a way they must think is sneaky, but really, it's just outright suspicious.

"Boys, let's walk." Phil says, and he pulls them both the opposite way, stepping quickly.

"What's happening?" Wilbur asks, glancing behind him, nearly stumbling on his feet. Phil holds him closer, keeping a wing half-wrapped around him. "Are there people following us?"

"I think word's spread to this town." Phil mutters out, Techno frowning and looking around nervously, the three of them quickly making their way past the buildings. "We need to go. This isn't a good place to search."

"Can we fly?" Techno asks.

"Fly?" Wilbur repeats, and he looks at Phil's wings, then up at Phil. "Wha- you can- well, you can, I guess, you do have wings-"

"Hey!" Someone yells, and Wilbur's words die in his throat. "Sir, hold on!"

Phil runs, Wilbur nearly tripping on his feet as he tries to run along. The group of people follow, and when Wilbur sneaks a glance back, he finds that they hold weapons in hand.

Hunters.

“Phil-!” Wilbur runs faster, trying to hold on as tight as he can as they turn the corner, stopping suddenly with more people at the end of the road. “Phil, Phil, they’re-”

“We’re alright.” Phil reassures, and he turns, turns again, and finds that they’re being surrounded at a crossroads, more people making some sort of circle around them, keeping distance, but staying wary.

“That’s a lot of people.” Techno remarks, and if he had to guess, he would say it’s about thirty or so. Only a few of them look like actual hunters though, with proper armor and weapons. Most of them just look like town citizens who have been dragged into the effort to catch Phil. He thinks that one person actually might be holding up a pan as a weapon. “Oh, they-” He blinks quickly. “They’re going to fight.” He breathes out.

“I don’t want any trouble.” Phil calls out, and the people seem to shift around at his words. Wilbur lets go of Phil’s hand to hug onto his side instead, and Techno leans in close. They’re both mostly hidden away by his wings. “Any reason as to why you’re all trailing after me and my kids?”

“You know what those are.” A woman calls out, holding up an axe. “Those- those things, under your wings!”

“Kids.” Phil responds, and he smiles thinly. “Don’t insult my children.”

“We have reports of you harboring two monsters that have been hunted down for the past several years.” A man yells out, Phil turning his head to look at him. “We’ve lost men, innocent lives, to those monsters. If you want to do the right thing, hand them over.”

The people look hesitant, scared, and Phil wonders if they’re trying to get to Wilbur and Techno without hurting Phil outright. Bargaining first, then force.

Phil huffs. “Innocent lives? Anyone who’s been trying to kill a helpless child as a job isn’t innocent.”

“That’s not a child!” A lady shrieks out, voice shaking. “Those are not children! I have children, I have kids, and those are innocent lives! The things hiding under your wings are not. Don’t you realize what they will do?! To you, and to me, to all of us?”

There’s a murmuring agreement that washes through the crowd.

Someone takes a careful step forward, a few nodding and getting closer.

“Don’t.” Phil warns. The people stop at his tone.

“Phil.” Techno whispers, hand still held tightly onto Phil’s leaning into Phil’s side. He sounds panicked.

“It’s alright.” Phil reassures, tilting his head town to Techno, who tries to hide even more underneath Phil’s wing.

There’s sudden footsteps, and the crowd’s volume jumps up, shouting out words and screaming, and Phil looks to see a brave hunter who’s coming right at Phil, towards Wilbur’s side.

Wilbur gasps at seeing the man get closer, and he hears the sound of Phil unsheathing his sword, Phil taking a step forward, and Wilbur moves with him, shoves his face into his shirt and quietly, desperately, hopes it’s going to be fine, it’ll be fine-

Phil’s wing shifts tighter around him, and Wilbur blinks his eyes open to realize it’s over before it’s even started, and the crowd has fallen silent in horrified shock. There’s a thump behind Wilbur, someone’s body falling to the ground, and Wilbur hears a smaller thump right after and he decides he will *not* turn around. Phil’s sword is wet with blood when he puts it back.

Someone screams.

“Phil.” Techno breathes out, and his voice sounds pained. Phil crouches down, picking up the two of them off the ground, and stretching his wings out into the air for all to see.

He takes off from the ground, Wilbur holding on for dear life, and they leave the scene behind, a few people running after with angry yells.

Phil ignores them easily, and instead just flies, making as much distance he can, going up high into the clouds.

After a moment, he turns his attention towards Techno, who’s tucked his head into Phil’s shoulder, his entire posture tense.

“Tech.” Phil whispers. Techno gives a hurt noise in response.

“Can we spar?” He chokes out, Wilbur feeling the wind whip around them, wildly pushing his hair around, and he would be amazed at being up in the sky, but his attention is solely on Techno, who’s looking more and more upset by the second.

“Right now?” Phil asks. “How bad is it?”

“Can we *spar*?” Techno asks again, tugging at Phil’s shirt. Phil suddenly swoops down, Wilbur screaming as they go to land in the trees.

Phil hits the ground a bit rough, stumbling and falling to his knees, and Techno tears away from him, running.

“Techno!” Phil yells, Wilbur not being put down but being carried as he chases after.  
“Technoblade!”

“What’s going on?” Wilbur asks, screaming again as Techno and Phil both run down a steep hill. Techno disappears into the bushes, and Phil stops right in front of the plants, breathing heavy.

“Technoblade, come out.” Phil asks. “He’s alright, it’s just-” Phil says to Wilbur, faltering. “Techno’s head gets loud sometimes. I should’ve expected it with us getting surrounded, but it’s fine.”

“Loud?” Wilbur asks, and Phil kneels down by the bush, hearing the rustling of Technoblade moving around through the leaves. He puts Wilbur down on his feet, leaning towards the bush.

“Technoblade.”

There’s a small high-pitched squeak, the sound of an animal in pain, and it cuts off suddenly. Phil freezes, before reaching out into the bush, and pushing the leaves to the side.

Techno’s curled up on the dirt, a dead animal in his hands. He stares at it like he’s not sure how it got there, and he makes a face at the blood on his hands.

“Dad, I think I killed a rabbit.” Techno says slowly, seeming calmer, but not entirely alright. He’s more grossed out than concerned.

“Ew.” Wilbur scrunches his nose.

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Wilbur learns about the voices then, Techno giving a so-so explanation as Phil scrubs his hands clean, putting the dead animal to the side.

“It’s just- there are was a lot of people, and chat wanted for a big fight to happen, so it started getting worse, then Phil killed that guy, and they *really* wanted blood after that-”

“Phil killed a guy!?” Wilbur exclaims.

“Did you not see that?”

“I...wasn’t looking.” He should’ve known, though, when he heard that thump behind him.

“That’s fair.”

Techno and Phil practice sparring as soon as Techno’s hands are clean. Wilbur sits to the side and watches, and he’s impressed by just how fast Technoblade can *move*. Phil’s faster, of course, but it’s still impressive on Techno’s part, because Wilbur is his size, and he would have never expected to hold a sword so deadly like Techno does.

Techno lunges and dodges and swings like he’s trying to fight something more than just Phil, and Wilbur wonders just exactly how loud the voices in his head can get. He doesn’t really understand the idea of ‘chatting’ in Techno’s head, voices only asking for a fight, but he files it away for future reference.

Technoblade is a lot more deadly than Wilbur first thought, and that realization is a lot more comforting than scary, because all it proves to Wilbur is that Techno will be hard to kill.

And that just means it’ll be hard to take him away.

## Chapter End Notes

so, uh, ya see, this chapter was supposed to be longer, and I was like 'goddamn no' so I cut it in half! And I am currently working on the second half. Another chapter coming in like, a few hours or so. Hope you don't mind the small wait :P

thanks for reading

# But do you know his past? And do you know the tales?

## Chapter Notes

ANOTHER LONG CHAPTER HELLO!

haha, i've written over 12k words today....damn.

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

They travel for the next three days, finding a dirt path and following it. Phil hopes it'll lead to a town that hasn't yet heard about them, heard about Phil, but it's unlikely, to be honest. Rumors are spreading, and Phil wouldn't be surprised if it's becoming more well known that Phil is searching for the kids to take under his wing.

It'll be harder to search, in that case. His description will be everywhere, and it'll be easy to spot out, because a man with wings isn't a common sight. *Wings* aren't a common sight, and usually it makes Phil stand out just in general, but now his wings will be a main factor in him getting hunted down.

He wonders if there's any stories drifting around for Phil and what he's doing. He's a bit curious, he'll admit. He wonders what the world thinks of an avian searching for monsters that will cause the apocalypse just so he can take them in as his children.

Do people regard him in fear? Will it warp the thoughts of most travelers, will that look of awe now be only wary, simply because of the stories that will travel far and wide? Phil won't miss it much. If protecting Wilbur and Techno means that he will be seen in fear, then he will take it with open arms. Maybe fear surrounding his image is a good thing. It might ward off hunters more easily.

Phil doesn't sleep for the three days of travel, instead he stays awake, looking up at the stars, holding Wilbur and Techno close as they rest against his chest, under his wings. The necklace tucked under his shirt glows brighter and brighter with each night he misses out on sleep, but

he ignores it. He can go a long while without any rest, as long as he isn't hurt in any sort of drastic way.

He hasn't slept in about five days, and he can feel whispers of fatigue on his shoulders, getting whisked away by the magic that flows in his veins. He can't sleep. Not exactly because of paranoia, that is part of it, the idea of a group of hunters surrounding them in their sleep, taking Wilbur and Techno from his arms while he's helpless to watch.

He can't sleep because he's more focused on keeping watch, keeping an eye on the kids in his arms. Wilbur sleeps fitfully, every now and then kicking his legs in a way that shows he's been pulled into a nightmare. Phil's always there the moment it starts, and he always simmers it down by humming quietly and running his hand through Wilbur's hair. Wilbur always drifts off more peacefully after that.

Techno sleeps like a rock, but it's the matter of actually getting him to sleep that is the problem. Sometimes it's easy, he'll knock out without a second thought, Wilbur's hand in his as he sleeps with his head tucked into Phil's shoulder, but sometimes it's harder than that. Sometimes, Techno stays awake, stays wary, and Phil has to assure him again and again that everything is alright. His voice always works like a charm, and Technoblade sleeps easily with Phil's words gently spoken over his head.

Phil stays awake, he doesn't rest except when it's to rest with his boys, to hold them underneath his wings and to calm them down so they can sleep easily. It's a bit reckless, maybe even stupid, but Phil can't help it. He can't help but ignore his own rest in favor of making sure Techno and Wilbur feel safe.

The three of them follow a long dirt road for about three days, the road sometimes becoming hard to follow, and sometimes being very obvious against the green grass. Wilbur and Techno chat about everything, anything, they ask questions, they press and poke at Phil for entertainment, and Phil's fond of them both, but they really are such little shits.

And they know it.

"Is sand good food?" Wilbur asks, as they're walking, his hand in Techno's, and Techno's hand in Phil's. "Debate."

“Maybe?” Techno answers hesitantly, shrugging a shoulder.

“Please don’t tell me you’ve eaten sand.” Phil sighs, Wilbur grinning wide with a little laugh.

“I’ve eaten gravel.” Techno tells Phil, turning his head up to him, and Phil looks at him with an incredulous face, having to stop in his walking for a moment.

“You’ve what?!” Phil exclaims, Techno making a face like he regrets admitting that so openly. “When?!”

“It was just...road gravel.” Technoblade confesses, kicking at the dirt under his boots. “I thought it’d be crunchy...”

“Was it?” Wilbur asks, as Phil mentally tells himself to not look away from Techno or Wilbur when they’re near sediment, because no, you’re not supposed to eat rocks, I don’t care if your teeth are sharp, Wilbur, that’s not edible-!

Three days into travel, after plenty of foolish questions and annoying Phil to no end, they come across a town.

It’s surrounded mostly by a forest of trees, but there’s a grassy plain far off by the end of the town, empty land with a bunch of what looks to be tree stumps. That area must’ve been a forest as well, once, but it was cut down. Not recently, with the grass being as green as it is, but it was cut, a long time ago.

The stumps stop by a hill that’s far off in the distance with the trees looking more abundant. Nothing is visible past those leaves, and while Phil can see the barest hint of a stone path leading up the hill, he can’t see if there’s any sort of building far off. Phil marks the place down as a possible place to run to if anything goes side-ways in the town.

“Alright, it doesn’t seem like there’s a church here...” Phil murmurs, as he leads Wilbur and Techno by the edge of the town, not yet approaching, but still being able to see the people walking around through the streets. “But that doesn’t mean we can’t find someone who can help.”

“What if we find a sorcerer?” Wilbur asks, tugging at the beanie over his head. His scales are still quite visible on his face, but with his fins tucked away under the hat, it’s less likely that he’ll be pointed out. “They could know something, right?”

“What about a wizard?” Techno adds, leaning into Phil’s side, pulling at his hand.

“That’s the same thing.” Wilbur leans forward to look past Phil so he can give Techno a unimpressed face.

Techno holds a hand up to his chin, thinking for a moment on what he knows. He’s never been one to really be that interested in magic, anything he’s ever read about was either too little or too complicated. It’s hard to get much information about any type of enchantments or spells, especially since most of it has withered away with time. “No, they’re actually kinda different. A sorcerer is born with magic, and a wizard gets it from books-”

“They both do magic!” Wilbur snaps.

“Not the same magic.” Techno responds, his tone dragging on like he knows he’s the one with more knowledge here. Wilbur makes a face, scrunching his nose at Techno.

Phil sighs fondly. “Either way, they should be able to help us. If we can find one.” He looks down to Techno. “Pull your hood up, Tech. Wilbur?”

“I’m hidden.”

“Alright then.” Phil grimaces, knowing there’s no good way to hide the wings on his back. He folds them back tightly, holding them close to his back and keeping them as small as he

can. “Let’s just go and see.”

They walk down the path and go towards the town, Phil holding both Techno’s and Wilbur’s hand, feeling their grips go tighter as they approach the buildings. They’re nervous, and that’s understandable. Phil hopes that one day there will be a time there they can walk through the streets of a bustling town without fear in their chests.

The streets are full of people, not so much as to where it’s hard to walk around, but enough to where it’s loud with the chattering of passing conversations, shop owners yelling from their front doors to come in for a good sale. Phil resists the urge to hide Techno and Wilbur underneath his feathers, and he instead just pulls them along through the streets, scanning the buildings for anyone that could be useful in their search.

It’s just a lot of shops, homes, there’s an inn that was bigger than the last one they were at, and Phil reminds himself to get a room there later on if everything goes well. Having a door that locks might compel him to finally sleep along with Techno and Wilbur.

They walk for a bit, and there’s still glances thrown their way, curious eyes, but they don’t linger. Techno’s face and hair is hidden, and Wilbur is cleaned up with his fins put away. It’s a bit harder to really recognize them, and while Phil’s wings are still out in the open, they’re not noticeable right away with how tightly held they are to his back.

“Phil.” Wilbur speaks up, after a while of pacing around through the stress. “Look. That seems different.”

He points to what looks to be a dark purple tent, set up in a narrow alleyway between two shops. Everyone passing seems to ignore with ease, and even Phil nearly looks past it, his eyes jumping from the store on the left to the store on the right, before he tells himself to focus and he sees the little tent.

There’s a sign hung up at the entrance, saying *‘free future tellings! Only five gold coins’*. It’s written in a bold red that seems to shout at Phil to come in and see if it’s true.

“That looks like a scam, mate.” Phil says gently, Wilbur blinking up at him with his finger still pointed towards the tent. For a second, Phil’s hit with the very real problem of Wilbur not knowing how to read.

“Magic is magic.” Techno shrugs, reading the sign as well. “Maybe they still can tell us something?”

Phil hums, and he decides that going over there is better than just wandering around aimlessly. He could ask for directions from a local towns person, but this is also an option, and Wilbur and Techno are staring at the tent curiously now.

With a quiet sigh, Phil gently pulls them along. “Alright, come on then.”

They make their way through the passing crowd of people, and get to the small tent, Phil pushing open the flap to let Techno and Wilbur walk in first, then him.

The first thing he notices right off the bat is how it seems much more bigger on the inside. Even though the tent was placed in a small, narrow alleyway, the inside feels like a small but decent room, a dark red rug with gold designs on the ground. There’s wooden chairs to the side, seemingly somewhere for customers to wait, and there’s a few lanterns hanging from the roof tent, which seems to have gotten taller when Phil walked in.

“Woah.” Wilbur breathes out, looking around with wide eyes, scanning the walls and rug underneath with wonder.

“It smells funny.” Techno points out, scrunching his nose as he takes a whiff of the air. Phil breathes in, smelling what he thinks might be chalk. Strange.

“Hello?” Phil asks, looking around, seeing that there’s yet another tent entrance across from him, the edges of the cloth lined with gold. “Anyone here?”

There's the crash of something on the other side, and Wilbur jolts, pressing himself to Phil's leg. Techno just squints warily, squeezing Phil's hand.

"Oh, give me a moment!" Someone calls out, another crash sounding out, joined with a shattering of glass, and a squawk of a chicken. Wilbur makes a confused noise.

The cloth is pushed to the side, a thin, pale woman coming into the room. Her skin looks unusually white, and she looks like she's just bones, starved, perhaps. She's wearing a flowy black skirt that reaches down to the floor, with designs of constellations on the fabric, with a matching sleeveless top that shows off intricate tattoos on her shoulders. The hat on her head is flat with a veil attached around the ends, hiding her face behind a thin see-through white. Phil can barely make out the shine of red earrings. There's multiple necklaces around her neck, jingling bracelets on her thin wrists and rings on all ten fingers, shiny and metallic.

"Hello, hello! I have been expecting you!" She greets, waving her arms up as she stands by the tent doorway. She takes a look at Phil, and then pauses, the smile in her face dropping into pure surprise, and she then drops her gaze to Wilbur and Techno, looking back and forth between them multiple times that it's almost amusing. "*Oh* . Maybe I wasn't expecting you."

Wilbur and Techno's faces go from curious about their surroundings to just suspicious, and they both lean into Phil, eyes narrowing up at the lady.

"Good afternoon." Phil greets, waving a hand up, and he looks down at Techno so see him holding onto Phil's shirt with a tight grip, staring at the lady with distaste.

"What an honor! To have you three walk into my tent, well, well, I didn't see this coming- or did I? Now you don't know." She grins, her voice chipper and mischievous. She steps forward towards Phil, kneeling down and making a dramatic bow, her jewelry jingling as she leans forward. Techno and Wilbur both jolt back. "It is a great pleasure to have you in my presence, the oh so fearsome Technoblade, and..." She lifts her head, seeming to think over something. "... the very charming Wilbur."

"How do you know my name?" Wilbur asks, Phil thinking the same thing.

“I’m a witch, kid. I know a lot of things.” She deadpans, and she rises to her feet, humming and stepping to the side. “And you!” She says to Phil. “What an honor, what a delight, is there- There is! You’re an avian!”

Phil shifts his wings behind him, Techno tilting his head as he seems to judge the woman very openingly.

“I’m Phil.” He introduces himself.

“Oh, I know. Or did I?” She snickers. “You may call me Maria. Or Ri, if you want. That’s a common nickname I have. That and ‘goddamn witch!’.” She sighs, holding her hands together to her chest. “Well, I can assume what brings you here. Probably not a future reading, or maybe in a way, yes. I don’t usually get many customers, y’know, hence the emptiness of the waiting room.”

She waves her arms around as to show it, then turns around with a twirl of her skirt and walks back through the cloth to the other room in the tent. “Phil, you, this way! The kids oughta stay in there.” She pauses, glances back. “This is adult business.” The cloth closes shut behind her.

“...she’s weird.” Wilbur mutters, Phil grinning.

“Wil.” Phil says gently, shaking his head. “It seems like she could help. Why don’t you two go sit over there, alright? Yell if you need me, I’ll see if she can help us.” He pushes them towards the old wooden chairs to the side, Techno and Wilbur resisting a bit against his nudging, but they go along begrudgingly anyway.

The chairs creak when they sit on them, and Wilbur makes a face, leaning in towards Techno and holding onto his arm. Techno just seems bored.

Phil follows after the lady into the next room, moving the tent flaps out of the way and stepping into a dimly lit room. There’s a circular table at the center, with a burning lantern in the middle of it. Small plants and gems are scattered over the tablecloth, and Phil looks

around the rest of the room, finding bookshelves and chests. There's small gems hanging from the ceiling, and they seem to glow faintly.

"Go on, sit down." Ri says, flipping through a book, standing to the side in the dimness of the room. "No need to be wary here. I'm not fond of hunters either."

Phil tilts his head, raising his eyebrows, but listening, stepping forward to take a seat at the table. Ri still doesn't turn to look at him, but she speaks up again. "Never did I think I would see the day. An avian, in my tent, seeking my help." She shuts the book closed, putting it on the shelf, turning her head to Phil. "How do most usually react to your presence?"

"Most are usually just excited to see the wings." Phil shrugs, leaning his elbows onto the table. He keeps a vigilant awareness of the knife that's strapped to his thigh and the sword on his hip.

"Yes, yes, most are naive, unknowing." She says, walking over. "Only a select few would know, would *remember*."

"We're not speaking of that." Phil says sharply, his tone serious. Ri just sits down in a seat across Phil with a sad smile. "Can you help me or not?" He asks, a bit kinder this time.

"With the last child." Ri whispers, leaning her elbows onto the table, the lantern lighting up her face through the thin veil. "Three monsters of the apocalypse, huh? Not my first pick to adopt, but whatever floats your boat."

"They're just kids." Phil corrects, wings shifting behind them.

"Oh, they're more than just kids." The lady hums, fiddling with a ring on her finger. "Those children may not exactly *have* to destroy the world, but you should know that they very well have the *capability* of doing so. They're young now, so they're weak now, but when they grow older..." She lifts her hands up, sighing. "The possibilities."

Phil takes a deep breath in, smelling chalk through the air, and he lets it out slowly. “I just want to find the last kid. Do you know where they are, if they’ve been born?”

The lady tilts her head side to side, seeming to consider. “He’s been born. Still just a baby, right now.” Phil sits up straight in his air, eyes wide. Another boy? A baby boy, his mind thinks, and he burns with a sense of protectiveness.

“However, even with such an esteemed guest as yourself and those little ones in the waiting room, I don’t offer my services for free. You’ll need to pay up-”

Phil throws a small bag onto the table, the blink of coins sounding out. “That’s forty gold.” He tells.

“Ooh.” She blinks, raising her eyes up to Phil with a grin. “Quick one. Alright, then. You’re clearly desperate, and I need to pay for food.” She takes the bag, pouring out the coins and counting them out as she speaks. “He’s not near here. He was born about a year ago, in the middle of an earthquake shaking the town. The brat looks like you, blond hair, blue eyes. Who knows, maybe that’s your actual kid.”

“I don’t have kids of my own blood.” Phil shakes his head, Ri frowning. “Where is he?”

“In a town up in the mountain tops. You know, people like me have heard about your efforts. There’s whispers about you, Phil.” She says her words in almost a singing manner, the coins clinking under her fingertips.

“Do you know where he is? Specifically?”

Ri looks up, smiling. “A town named Summercross. It’s a long way from here. The mountain is quietly protected, and if you go there, you’ll find that the kid is in good hands. People like me watch over him. Keep hunters away.” She says quietly, and Phil curls his hands into tight fists. “But, they don’t mean to raise him. Like I said, there’s been whispers. There’s connections around the lands, and they wait for you to pick him up.”

Phil's grip loosens and he lets out a silent sigh.

"When word traveled that a man with wings was going around, and taking in monsters of the apocalypse as his children, well. Seemed like a crazy tale." Ri drops a coin, letting it clatter loudly onto the table. "But you do have a good heart. And I think, someone who's so strange, so unusual, is the perfect candidate to take care of children who will be something more than anything that's ever been seen."

"Thank you." Phil says, voice quiet. "For the help, and...well."

"Hm." Ri looks up, pursing her lips as she stares at Phil for an unusually long moment. "Now, *I* have a question."

Phil tilts his head.

Ri smiles. "Have you ever heard...of The Angel of Death?"

Time stops for a moment, and Phil doesn't move, doesn't breathe. The air is filled with a tense silence, and Ri looks on in curiosity, eyes narrowed.

Phil stands up abruptly, the chair screeching back. "I'm done here."

"Wha- No, no, wait, we can keep talking-!" Ri stumbles to her feet, following Phil as he walks out swiftly into the waiting room, where Wilbur and Techno raise their heads in interest. "I didn't know that's a sore spot, we can gloss over it! Hold on, I'll give a refund-"

Phil stops and turns around, leaning in as she freezes. "I'm done talking."

He turns to Techno and Wilbur. "Boys, come on." He says, more gently.

They scramble to get up from their chairs, quickly taking their spot beside Phil's side, holding onto his hands. They take one look at Phil's unhappy expression, and the woman who seems panicked, and then give matching glares.

They're tiny glares, but still, very hatred filled.

"I don't like you." Wilbur declares at the witch, and Phil huffs, amused.

"Wil." Phil tugs them towards the entrance, looking to leave. "Come on, let's go."

"Wait, wait- one last thing, please." Ri holds her hands up, not following, but taking a sigh of relief when Phil stops. "There's a hill, far off, past the cut down trees. The townspeople don't go there, since it's rumored to be protected by something... unusual. It's safe for people like you, if you fall into trouble."

Phil looks behind him. "Thank you." He says, and he leaves right after, Ri standing there, forty gold coins richer, and a million more questions in her head.

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Phil goes to get a room in the inn, after that.

Finally, he knows where the last one is. He knows the town name, the location, and the information that the kid is being quietly protected as he's far away. It takes off a bit of worry off his shoulders, and he smiles.

Wilbur and Techno are upset though, especially with how Phil had walked out.

"I didn't like her." Wilbur states again, tilting his chin up as Phil laughs.

“Mate.” Phil drags out his voice, touched at how offended they are on his behalf.

“Did she even tell you anything?” Techno asks, tugging at Phil’s hand as they make their way down the street to the inn that Phil saw earlier. “What did she say?”

“She told me where the last kid is, and that he’s a baby boy who’s living up in the mountains.” Phil tells, and both their expressions perk up at that.

“A child.” Wilbur points out.

“You’re a child, Wil.”

“A smaller child.” Wilbur hums. “When do we meet him?”

“Well.” Phil shrugs, finally spotting the inn at the end of the road. “The town is far, and I sorta recognize the town name she gave me. It’ll take a while to get there, but at least we know he’s safe, hm?”

“Yeah.” Techno breathes out. “That’s good.”

“It is.”

---

Phil buys a room without any problems. He doesn’t go in to check it out right away, and instead takes Wilbur and Technoblade to grab a quick bite for lunch. They end up having steak with cooked mushrooms, and while the kids poke at the mushrooms with a face, they love the steak.

The town seems safe, for the most part. No one's given Phil a strange look, and he keeps his wings held tightly closed, so tightly held that most overlook it, and at first glance it seems like there's just a backpack on his shoulders.

They spend the rest of the day in the room Phil bought, and it's much bigger than the last one they were at. There's a comfortable bed at the center of the wall, with a window to the side, letting in sunlight, and empty drawers in the corner. There's a nightstand beside the bed, with a lamp that fascinates Wilbur, and he loves the click of the lamp when he pulls it to turn it on.

Phil goes to sleep that night with a locked door and the window curtains shut tight. Wilbur and Techno lie against him, held underneath his wings as they sleep, and Phil stays awake for a moment longer at night, feeling the time drag on. The necklace under his shirt glows, brighter than usual, and he sighs.

He holds his sons closer, and chooses to finally close his eyes, letting himself drift off late in the night.

He wakes up not soon after.

The window is wide open, wind blowing through, the curtains waving up as they're blown to the side. He didn't leave it open, he shut it tightly closed.

There's the creak of the floorboards behind him, and Phil's heart stops, sleep escaping him.

There's someone in the room.

He immediately pushes Wilbur and Techno off the bed, hearing them scream as they're rudely awakened, hitting the floor. When he rolls over, he's met with a stranger beside him, jabbing a knife down, and Phil doesn't move fast enough to stop it.

Yelling in surprise and in pain, Phil kicks the intruder backwards, watching them stumble back. Phil's been stabbed in the side, but it's hardly a concern as he yanks out the knife and rolls off the bed, jumping at the attacker.

There's more yelling scuffling, and when Techno and Wilbur are on their feet, panicked and scared, Phil's already killed the man, and he gets up, holding a hand to his side.

"Dad!" Techno yells, Wilbur gasping at the wound on his side.

"We need to go, get your shoes, Techno, your sword-" Phil rushes, and they move with a quick panic. There's not even enough time for the two of them to tug on their shoes though, because there's slamming at the door.

"We know you're in there!" Someone yells. "Come out, now!"

Phil does, he swings the door open, then promptly punches whoever's on the other side before they can even blink.

There's a crowd outside in the street ready to meet them, and Phil takes Techno and Wilbur and holds them close, kills anyone that gets too close to them. Wilbur screams out with his voice echoing into the night, and at one point Phil's not fast enough to protect Technoblade, Techno instead killing a hunter himself.

Phil picks them off, creates a path, and Wilbur and Techno fend off anyone who tries to grab them, Wilbur charming them to stay still, and Techno using his own sword to cut their throat.

A net gets thrown more than once, trying to weigh them down, and Phil pulls it away, cuts them away, throws them to the side, then kills whoever had thrown it. There's people standing beside the buildings as they run through the streets, and they scream to not let Phil reach the forest, to not reach the hill.

Phil ignores their yelling, and tears out someone's throat with his nails when they grab onto Technoblade. His hands and clothes are dirty, and they're all a mess, and when finally Phil has just enough space to breath, and grabs Technoblade and Wilbur, and takes off into the air, narrowly avoiding the arrows that follow. Wilbur screams over his shoulder as they leave, and Techno laughs, out of panic, out of the relief of getting far, who knows.

Phil just flies.

---

He collapses at the tree line of the hill he had seen before.

Everything's heavy, and Phil's sharply reminded of the deep wound in his side as he takes Techno and Wilbur by the hands and pulls them along to run into the trees.

They run, and Phil hopes that what the witch from before said was true, that this hill is safe, because he knows the people will follow.

And when he falls to the ground in exhaustion just a few minutes in, he's not at all surprised.

"Phil!" Techno yells, immediately trying to pull him up. "Get up, we need to go!"

"Wait, wait-" Wilbur chokes out, and he coughs, waving a hand to Techno. "He's- Phil?"

Phil takes a second to just lay back on the dirt, gasping in the night air and trying to calm his heart. They're somewhat safe right now, but they need to keep moving.

Techno and Wilbur have fallen to the ground with him, and Wilbur's grabbing him by the face, nearly shaking him. "Don't die. Do not die."

“I’m alright, I’m alright.” Phil huffs with a grin, sighing heavily as he tries to sit up.

“No you’re not! You’re- sit back down!” Wilbur yells voice cracking mid-way through, raspy and rough and he tries to push Phil onto the ground. “Technoblade-!”

“You’re going to bleed out.” Techno says quietly, and Phil feels something getting pressed to his side, and when he looks down, he finds Techno’s taken off his hood, using it to try and lessen the bleeding from Phil’s wound.

“Press harder, he’s going to die!” Wilbur snaps, then coughs terribly, holding at his throat.

“Stop talking, we might need your voice!” Techno snaps back, and he leans more against Phil’s side.

“No, no-” Phil lays back, blinking his eyes hard to try and push away the feeling of exhaustion that’s creeping up. He’s pushed it for too long, he knows. He’s going to pass out, whether he likes it or not. The necklace around his neck can only do so much, and it needs energy to heal. Which means Phil needs to be rested.

Which, is a problem, since he hasn’t slept in a week.

He reaches his hands up, holding onto Wilbur’s face and forcing him to look at him. “Wilbur, listen to me. You too, Techno.” Techno’s near tears, and Wilbur is already crying, grabbing at Phil’s hands with a deathgrip. “I’m going to be fine. I won’t die. Look, look-”

Without a sliver of hesitation, Phil pulls the necklace out from underneath his shirt, and it glows a bright, bright red in his hand. “See this?”

“Wh-what...?” Wilbur trails off, barely a whisper, and Techno’s blinking at him in confusion.

“It’s enchanted, okay? I won’t die, it heals me. It keeps me safe, but it needs energy in order to heal me. I-I haven’t been sleeping too much lately, so it’s slow, but I’ll be alright.”

“Magic?” Techno blurts out, Phil feeling his vision swim for a moment. “Phil? Dad?!”

“I’m okay.” Phil huffs. “I’m fine, I’m going to be just fine. I won’t die, promise.” He holds a palm to Wilbur’s face, and reaches a hand out to Techno. “Here, Techno, come here.”

“No- you’re, you’re still bleeding.”

“It’ll heal, mate. With time. I’m alright.”

“You- You need to sleep, to heal faster, right?” Wilbur leans down, whispering low, close to Phil.

“It would go faster if I rested, yes. But I’ll be fine either way. Hurts like a bitch, but I’m alright.” Phil grins. “Look, Technoblade, look at the cut on my hand.” He holds up his palm towards Techno, and Technoblade lifts his head to find it looking better than before, not completely healed, but the skin is pink and more put together. It looks more like a bad scratch, rather than an attempt at stopping a knife.

Some of the tension from Techno’s shoulders let go once he realizes that Phil really is healing just fine. “You can’t stay hurt.” Techno realizes out loud. “That’s- that’s good.”

“I’m going to be okay.” Phil promises. He turns to Wilbur. “Wil, do me a favor, help me up?”

“You should rest.” Wilbur whispers, Phil grinning.

“When we’re more into the forest and safe, then I’ll take a nap, okay? But I need to get up.”

“No, you-” Wilbur hesitates, looking at Techno, who looks back with something Phil can’t pick apart. Maybe it’s because his vision is going blurry again, and he blinks hard again, trying to stay awake. “You should sleep. We can keep watch.”

“Wil.” Phil insists. “I’m alright. I can get up, just help me a bit.”

“Dad...” Wilbur breathes out, holding onto Phil’s hand that’s pressed against his face. Phil’s heart squeezes, and he smiles. “*Go to sleep.*” He goes into a coughing fit right after.

Phil freezes, eyes going wide for a second, and then they close, his entire body going limp.

“Is he asleep?” Techno asks, Wilbur nodding and carefully putting Phil’s hand down. “Okay. Okay, then. Do we- do we wait, now?”

Wilbur nods again, rubbing at his throat. It’s sore, and it hurts, but he hopes that he can use it if they have to.

“Should we-” Wilbur whispers, turning to Technoblade, and they both freeze at the sound of rustling nearby.

There’s voices, getting closer, yelling.

“Okay, quick, help me move him.” Techno jumps to his feet, Wilbur following, and they take Phil by the arms, pulling him across the ground to try and make distance. The necklace around his neck glows bright, humming. Phil continues to breathe, healing by the minute, and Techno hopes that Phil will be alright like he said.

Wilbur can make out the voices of hunters coming nearby, yelling ‘this way, they went this way!’ and his heart slams in his chest, hands trembling as he pulls at Phil. It’ll be painful to overuse his voice, but it’ll be necessary if the hunters find them.

The yelling gets nearer and nearer, and Wilbur hears a ‘I see them!’

His throat feels dry with fear, and Techno gives up on moving Phil, taking out his sword and standing in front of him. Wilbur drops to the ground, breathing heavy and draping himself over Phil, ready to try and be some sort of shield.

The sound of approaching footsteps stop.

And there’s a rumbling voice that lifts into the air, Techno and Wilbur sharing a scared glance.

“*Hunters aren’t allowed in this forest.*” Something says, and Wilbur swallows, feeling his throat burn.

There’s screaming, and the sound of footsteps going away.

Two sets of footsteps still go towards them.

Techno raises his sword with a snarl, and Wilbur presses himself closer to Phil, nearly hyperventilating at this point, scared and panicking, and his mouth opens and closes, ready to scream out a command-

A tall demon comes out from the trees, large horns on his head, and the sight of him makes Wilbur blink in shock, his mind going blank. Techno seems thrown off too, and he just stares, eyes wide.

“Oh my goodness.” Bad says, holding his hands to his mouth. “Skeppy, these are kids!”

“What?” Another person pushes past, much shorter than the first one, and Wilbur realizes that his skin twinkles, as if diamonds have been embedded into his skin, his face. “What?! Why’s- wait, wait.”

Their eyes fall onto the person Techno and Wilbur are protecting, and Techno lets out another snarl, a clear warning, Wilbur bares his teeth, and presses himself to Phil’s chest.

“Holy shit.” Skeppy swears, eyes wide. Bad doesn’t reprimand him for the language, because he’s in shock too. “Are those-”

“Wings.” Bad breathes out, feeling short of breath from the sight. Two kids, hybrid kids, by the looks of it, trying to protect-

This shouldn’t be possible. Bad knows this. He knows a lot, he’s been around a long time, and he has old books talking about old stories from long, long ago.

This, in front of him, shouldn't be possible.

Phil’s right there, sleeping and healing slowly, with a necklace that hums obviously with magic, an complicated enchantment, but he shouldn’t be here at all.

There hasn’t been a single winged folk, a single avian seen in *hundreds* of years.

They were all killed off centuries ago.

## Chapter End Notes

:)

mannn I loved writing this chap it got so LONG tho, imagine having a singular chapter that's 12k words? wack

instead we got TWO chapter with 6k words each. Neato

thanks for reading, I shall pause the brainrot now and go work on my other fics bc those are being neglected oof

## A jump in trust

Wilbur takes in a shuddering breath as the two people stare with wide eyes at them, at *Phil*, and there's a burning fire in his chest that grows when Wilbur realizes where their eyes are pointed at.

They stare at Phil's wings, feathers pressed against the dirt underneath Phil as he sleeps, and Wilbur bares his teeth, tries his best to make a snarl that will scare them off. He will not let them take a single feather. He will tear out their throats before he lets that happen.

Techno's gotten over his shock, and he holds up the sword with a clear threat, taking a careful step back, staying in front of Wilbur and Phil.

"Get away." Techno warns, and his voice shakes as he says it.

The strangers just stare, speechless in the sight before them, and Techno risks a single glance behind him, looking at Wilbur. Wilbur looks back, eyes wide and fearful.

"Oh my goodness." Bad breathes out, and he seems to catch himself, taking a step forward.  
"Oh my- The both of you-"

"Get away!" Techno yells.

"Are you okay?" Bad stops, but he doesn't move back. Instead, he kneels down on one knee, holding a hand behind him to keep Skeppy from wandering ahead of him. Skeppy reaches out, holds onto his wrist loosely. "Are you- oh, you're both so young."

"If you get any closer," Techno responds, holding the sword in his hands so tightly that his knuckles nearly turn white. "I'll kill you. I will!"

“No, no- we’re not-” Bad glances back at Skeppy, who looks back with a baffled face, completely at a loss of what to do here. “We’re not going to hurt you.”

“Leave.” Wilbur whispers, makes a face as his throat *burns* , almost matching the flame that’s in his chest.

Bad lets out a quiet breath, his gaze flicking over to Phil again, Wilbur mostly covering from view with how much he’s leaning over him. He can’t see his face, but he can see the wings, see a hand resting in the dirt, completely covered in blood, as if he used his nails to tear through someone.

Thinking on how there had been people trespassing into the forest, and the state of these kids in front of him, it’s not unlikely that Phil had indeed used his nails to kill.

“Bad.” Skeppy whispers, leaning down close behind Bad’s ear. “What the hell do we do? That’s- that man has *wings*.”

“I know.”

"He's an *avian*."

"I know." Bad whispers back, turning his head to Skeppy and covering his mouth with a hand, keeping his eyes on the two kids before him. Techno hardly falters in his stance, and Wilbur looks near tears. “Don’t make any sudden movements. They’re scared.”

“*Leave!*” Wilbur tries to scream, but he’s used his voice up, and he coughs and leans over Phil, curling up in pain as his throat feels as if it’s being stabbed from the inside.

“Wilbur!” Techno gasps at seeing Wil suddenly lower his head and sound as if he’s choking, and he goes to kneel beside Phil, hand reaching out towards Wilbur. “Stop talking, stop it-”

“Are you alright?” Bad asks, and Techno sends a glare that promises death if he tries to ask another question. Bad closes his mouth with a sorry expression.

“Wil?” Techno asks, when Wilbur raises his head again, a single tear falls down his cheek. “Are you okay? Can- can you talk?”

Wilbur shakes his head for both questions. His throat is sore, terribly so, and what he would usually do now is bide his time and not use his voice at all for a little while, but that’s not an option, not with strangers so close to Phil.

“Okay- Just-” Techno gives a quick glance to Bad and Skeppy. “Just, don’t talk.”

Technoblade stands back up, Wilbur leaning his head down against Phil’s chest, pressing a hand into Phil’s side and feeling waves of worry wash over him when his hand comes away wet with blood.

“You two, go away.” Techno threatens, holding his sword up. He ignores how he feels tired, how his hand is shaking and how his heart races fast in his chest. “Now.”

Skeppy frowns, Bad shaking his head the smallest bit. The sword in Techno’s hand is far from clean, smears of red all across the blade, and Bad doesn’t want to know if that means the kid has actually killed or not. It should be obvious, but he hopes that maybe the sword belongs to the man with wings, rather than the boy in front of him that’s trying his hardest to be scary.

“I can’t do that.” Bad breathes out.

“Leave us alone!” Technoblade screams.

“Kid, we can’t just leave you here.” Skeppy speaks up, holding a hand out.

“Yes, you can.” Techno says back, narrowing his eyes. “We don’t want you here, I want you to leave.”

“What about your friend?” Bad asks, nodding to Phil, who stays still with his eyes closed. Wilbur can feel him breath with each passing second, but it’s too slow for his comfort, and he closes his eyes to try and stop the way a sob wants to break out. “He might need help, he looks like he’s hurt.”

“We don’t-” Techno falters at the mention of Phil, and he hesitates, Wilbur humming quietly over Phil’s chest. “We- We can’t-”

“Hey, look, we’ll make a deal. You let us help you, and we’ll take you to our home nearby. We can patch you guys up.” Skeppy offers, and Techno keeps looking at Phil, keeps glancing back, looking as if he’s terribly conflicted, torn between choices.

Techno stares at them for a long while, the sword in his hands shaking the slightest bit as he blinks rapidly, holding back his own tears. He looks towards Wilbur again. He’s rubbed his face clear of any tears, and instead has decided to hold his ear to Phil’s chest, listening to the heartbeat.

Phil’s hurt. Techno knows that much, even with the necklace, he’s still not sure if that’s going to be enough. Phil said he would be okay, but it’s hard to believe it when he’s staying so still on the ground. For a split second, Techno wonders if that’s what Phil would look like if he was dead, and there’s a sharp pang of fear that stabs his chest.

What if Phil dies here? What if that necklace wasn’t enough? Magic or not, what if Phil-

“I swear we won’t do anything to harm you.” Bad promises, taking a careful step forward, Techno breathing faster and turning his attention back and forth to the strangers in front of him, and to his family behind him. “I’m not fond of people hurting others. I won’t let you get hurt, I promise.”

Techno shakes his head, biting his tongue in his mouth and trying to think, trying to make a plan, but there's no plan, there's no time, there's no opportunity he can take, because Phil is unconscious on the ground, Wilbur's voice is gone for the time being, and Technoblade-

Technoblade is so tired and *scared*.

He's scared of the people in front of him, he's scared that they're going to be attacking him just like the people a few minutes ago did. He's scared he's going to have to use this sword again and dig it into someone's chest. He's scared of getting taken away, getting separated from Phil or Wilbur.

But he's more scared of letting Phil continue to die.

So he lowers his sword, tears brimming at the edge of his eyes. "Please help him." He nods to Phil. "We're okay, he's not, please."

Wilbur looks up, Techno locking eyes with him for a moment, and they silently communicate that this is necessary for Phil's sake.

Bad lets out a small sigh of relief, and Skeppy nudges him to move.

When Bad stands up to his feet, Techno stumbles back, Wilbur pressing closer to Phil with panic in his eyes, and Bad holds out his hands. "It's alright." He reassures, and Wilbur nods as a response.

"I think you're going to need to carry him." Skeppy murmurs, looking at Phil with a small frown. "He doesn't look like he's waking up anytime soon."

"Is it alright if I pick him up?" Bad asks, pointing a finger towards Phil. "Your friend looks like he's really hurt, I don't know if he should wake up."

Techno hesitates, looking towards Wilbur. They're both quiet for a long moment, debating the option in their heads, until Wilbur slides away from Phil, getting to his feet and stepping over Phil to get to Techno. Bad walks forward, quickly making his way over to Phil and leaning down, scanning what injuries he can see.

Phil stays perfectly still, breathing slowly and quietly, the necklace sitting over his chest glowing bright red. Bad makes a slight face at the necklace, but pushes it aside and reaches down anyway, picking up Phil from the ground.

Wilbur's taken hold of Techno's hand, and he squeezes it tight, not liking the sight of Phil being carried by a stranger they don't know if they can trust. But this is their best bet at the moment, and Wilbur hopes that luck is on their side.

"Are you two up for walking a bit?" Bad asks. "Skeppy can carry one of you if you're hurt."

Skeppy makes a face like he did not agree to that, but with one stern look from Bad, he nods.

Techno glances to Wilbur. Wilbur shakes his head.

"No, we can walk. Let's go." Techno says for them, and Bad nods.

"Okay, come on. Our home is just a bit more up the hill." He turns and walks into the trees with Phil in his arms, Techno and Wilbur quickly walking after him. Skeppy keeps close behind the two of them.

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Their house is small and cozy, Wilbur thinks. It's made of stone, the door creaking as it's pushed open, and the inside smells sweetly of cinnamon.

The floorboards are a bit cold under his feet, and Wilbur looks down to remember that neither he or Techno had been able to get shoes on before the chaos of escaping the town happened. He's a bit sad over losing something Phil's given him, but also a bit satisfied at being barefoot once more. He thinks it's more comfy without anything on his feet, even if it means he could step on something pointy outside.

Techno keeps a tight grip on his hand as they follow right behind Bad through the hallway, and Wilbur holds on just as tightly back. Even with the unfamiliar house, and the unfamiliar monsters beside them, he feels better at knowing Techno is right next to him. Techno seems to feel the same.

He can see Phil's head just barely from around Bad's arm, and Wilbur swallows, feeling his throat burn and the fire in his chest burn a little more. He's afraid of even having Phil be carried away by someone he can't trust, but Phil needs rest, needs to be patched up, and once they have that, then they can make a plan to take Phil and run.

They're led into a room, and Techno and Wilbur stand to the side awkwardly, looking around and finding it to be a simple room with a bed, a few bookshelves, and a desk in the corner. There's a lantern that sits at the nightstand, and it glows bright blue as Phil is placed down onto the bed, still asleep.

"Skeppy, could you go get some bandages and potions?" Bad asks, standing at the bedside, head turned to his partner lingering by the doorway.

"Sure." Skeppy agrees, and he walks off down the hall.

Bad turns his head back to Phil, looking at the wings for just a moment, before moving on and scanning for anything that's life threatening. The wound on his side seems to be the worst, but there's a few wounds on his arms and chest too, and he's not sure if Phil's hurt on his hands or not, because there's drying blood smeared all across his fingers and palms.

Techno and Wilbur step quietly to the side of the room, watching intently at Bad and his hands, as if he does anything to Phil, they'll be returning it ten-fold.

Bad smiles, raising his head to the two of them. “I’m sorry I didn’t introduce myself earlier. You can call me Bad. The one who’s all shiny is Skeppy.”

Techno doesn’t give a response, but Wilbur nods, the slightest bit.

“What’s your name?” Bad asks, and he just gets narrowed eyes in response. “Or, your friend’s name?” He points to Phil.

“He’s our dad.” Techno mutters, and Bad nods.

“Oh, okay.” They don’t say anything more. “Well, your dad is going to be just fine, okay?”

“He better be.” Techno says back, and Wilbur smirks the tiniest bit, looking nearly smug.

Skeppy comes back with a box of healing supplies, and Bad goes to try and patch up Phil, ignoring the way blood is staining the sheets, and the way there are two sets of eyes watching his every move.

# Recover just a bit

## Chapter Notes

heyo heyo

this chapter shall be dedicated to yak\_i\_guess, because of the bookmark they left that had the tags 'just phil adopting the three antichrists, thats not even a metaphor'

hehe, antichrists

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Bad won't lie, he's a bit nervous. Not so nervous to where it's hard to focus on what he's doing, because he can't afford to be negligent with tending to someone's wounds, especially with someone like this. But he is a bit put off by how the kids are just- staring.

Glaring, more like. Bad presses a towel to Phil's side to try and stop the bleeding a bit, and when it comes away with red, he feels as if two holes are being burnt into the back of his head.

Well, he's glad they seem to care for their dad?

Risking a glance behind him, he's met with the sight of Techno still glaring daggers, red eyes narrowed in a way that promises consequence if Phil is not treated. Wilbur is holding onto his arm, clinging in a way that's heartwarming, but he's also giving a death glare at Bad and the clawed hands that hover over Phil's wounds.

They're so young. Bad is old, he knows that, he's sorta lost count, but he's around 500 years old last he checked. He's probably a bit more, by now. Maybe his idea of young could be a bit skewed, but he knows that these two are kids.

Children, who had ran into the forest with their father for safety. There's blood splattered over Wilbur's shirt, not his own blood, but a result of fighting, no doubt. Technoblade has blood on his face, his hands, and it makes Bad feel a bit sad. Children shouldn't need to fight, shouldn't need to defend their lives due to cruel people. Usually the townspeople don't go to this extent, don't go so far as to actually try and hurt *children*.

He's glad they're here in his home now, and he's glad that them and their dad had gotten to the forest. Now they're under his watch, and now that means they're safe.

Even if they're not so convinced of the fact.

The necklace over Phil's chest glows red, and Bad's eyes are drawn to it, and his ears can pick up on a quiet hum. It's enchanted, no doubt, with something strong that Bad has never seen before. The color of it reminds him of the healing potion Skeppy gave him just a minute prior, and a suspicion rises up in his head.

He checks the wound in Phil's side, and finds it smaller than before. It's cleaner, thanks to Bad and his efforts, but he hasn't even used any potions yet. It's healing unusually quick, and Bad isn't sure if that's because of the necklace and it's enchantment, or because the man is an avian. Perhaps avians have the ability to heal quickly without any potions? He wouldn't know. The only information Bad has of avians is lost, old books that have mostly withered away to time.

Skeppy clears his throat, pulling Bad out of his mind, and he looks behind him to see Skeppy lingering awkwardly at the doorway, one of the boys turning his head to him, and the other still paying close attention to Bad.

"Uh, are you guys hungry, or something?" Skeppy asks, pointing a thumb behind him, expression unsure. "There's food and water in the kitchen..." Both Bad and Skeppy aren't strangers to having guests, there's always extra dinner, an extra bed. But it's been a bit of a while since someone has come here for safety, and it's been even longer since anyone so young has come here either.

“Oh, yes!” Bad stands up straight, waving a hand to the door. “You two can go rest and maybe eat something while I do this, okay? Maybe change into some new clothes? If you want.”

“I dunno if anything would fit you two, but eh, maybe a shirt of mine?” Skeppy holds two hands up, seeming to try and see how big his own shirt is and then comparing it to Wilbur, who blinks at him with a raised eyebrow. “Maybe. Would be kinda big.”

Wilbur frowns, but Technoblade glances towards the doorway and seems to consider it for a moment, tugging at the arm that Wilbur is clinging to. Wil looks towards him, and Techno nods his head to Skeppy. Wilbur shakes his head. Techno raises his eyebrows, Wilbur makes a vague hand gesture.

Bad blinks, checking on Phil once again, and he’s glad to find the avian still breathing steadily, the wound in his side seeming to grow smaller by the second, and the necklace laying on his chest still glowing brightly.

Wilbur and Techno continue to communicate silently, and Techno gestures towards his throat, then his mouth, and then pokes a finger into Wilbur’s chest. Wilbur blinks, and they both stare at each other for a solid three seconds, then turn to Skeppy.

“Do you have tea?” Technoblade asks, Skeppy stumbling at the fact they’ve spoken up out of the blue while they had seemed to be in the middle of an intense silent conversation.

“Maybe?” Skeppy shrugs, glancing at Bad.

“Check the top cabinets.” Bad waves a hand, reaching for bandages.

“Probably.” Skeppy changes his answer.

Techno gives a look at Wilbur as if he’s asking a question, and Wilbur looks towards Phil, frowns, then nods.

“Okay.” Techno says, and he and Wilbur walk towards the doorway, Skeppy moving to the side to let them pass, and watching as they wait with stares for him to lead them to the kitchen.

“Guess we’re going to make tea, then.” Skeppy mutters, leading the way.

“I’ll be sure to call if your dad wakes up!” Bad yells out, and he doesn’t get a response, only the sound of footsteps quietly padding down the hall.

Bad sighs, eyes falling to the necklace again. His eyes wander to the wings on Phil’s back, and he can’t explain the emotion that comes with seeing it. Sorrow, maybe. Surprise, shock, joy? How can anyone feel upon seeing a person that shouldn’t be alive?

From what Bad knows, avians were killed a long time ago. The reasons seem to vary, though, and the history is warped. Any books that talk about avians come from when they were still alive, and those books have practically fallen apart to old age.

Bad’s found a few, but it’s not enough to really tell what happened. When he asked around, people either didn’t know that avians existed, or just thought it was an old tale. People with wings had fallen away from memory, and Bad couldn’t find anything.

The idea of it was...depressing. An entire people, gone. Bad knows they exist, knows they had to, for the books he’d read and the few stories he’s gotten that had been passed down from generation to generation are proof of that.

This man in front of him is living proof of that.

All the avians were killed centuries ago, and they were thought to be dangerous as well. Any books that Bad has only tell of how they lived. And any stories he’s gotten from people just tell him that they had used to be a dangerous type of people. Stronger than most, more magical than most. Bad has assumed that maybe they had been considered a threat, and that was that. A drastic decision, and a bit of a flimsy reason for all of them to be snuffed out, but

that was all he had. He didn't *have* better answers. He didn't have any type of answers. Only his own questions and searches that led to nowhere.

But this man could have some answers. If he's alive, then surely there are others? If he's here, then maybe they hadn't all been killed, but rather went into hiding.

Bad hopes that's what's happened. It's a better reality than all the avians being gone. He had always wanted to meet one.

Maybe not like this, but it's better than nothing. He stopped searching about avians a long while ago, when he settled down with Skeppy to live here. Maybe he should've kept on searching.

Phil doesn't stir as Bad carefully ties the bandages tightly around his middle, keeping the wound secure. It'll probably heal rather quickly, judging by the magic the man clearly possesses.

He carefully pulls away Phil's shirt, frowns at how soaked with blood it is, and how torn it looks, and he puts it to the side. There's a sword that's attached to his hip, and Bad very slowly takes it away, placing it to the side as well. No need for that.

Bad wonders if there's something he's missing. It's been a long while since he and Skeppy have left this forest. The villagers aren't usually so persistent as to chase monsters past the tree line, because they know Bad offers sanctuary. They're well aware that he lives here, and that anyone who comes into the forest is under his watch, and not to be hurt.

But they had run in anyway, sword and crossbows raised, and there had been an awful lot of them. Bad had gotten a peek at the outside of the forest, and found a rather big crowd hovering nearby. This man and his children had stirred up quite a commotion, and Bad isn't sure if it's because he's an avian, or if because his two children were hybrids.

Not that the townspeople would know the importance and rarity of him being an avian though. Most people don't remember avians.

Bad resists the urge to try and wake up the man, to ask questions. He wants to know what happened, he wants to know why he's alive. By all accounts, this shouldn't be possible, but then again, Bad knows that destiny can work a bit funny at times.

Bad raises up Phil's hand and frowns at the way it's soaked with blood. It looks like he used his bare hands to kill someone, and he doesn't doubt for a moment that was the case. Even so, Bad doesn't feel threatened by the man in front of him, and he instead takes a towel and tries to scrub off the red on Phil's hands.

Why does a man like this have two kids that are drastically different hybrids? It's not terribly unusual, but most families aren't so diverse. They're wary, as well, with how the boys hadn't even given up their names, and instead of crying and being scared, they had only stayed quiet and on guard. It's not quite right, in Bad's head.

At that age, he would expect them to be scared, to be crying and wanting comfort, but the only comfort they take is by holding onto each other, and they had seemed more focused on the possible threat around them. Almost like they're too used to situations like this.

Bad doesn't like the idea of that. Kids so young shouldn't have to worry. They should be living a peaceful life. Maybe once their dad wakes up, and Bad knows more, he could point them towards somewhere safe? He's sure he knows of a few places that are good to hide out, to live. Perhaps then their situation could be better.

He uses water on the towel, scrubs a bit more, and tries to not think too hard on the questions that are swirling around in his head, or the concerns that press against his heart. Instead, he just sits on the bed beside the sleeping avian, and tries to wash away the blood that stains Phil's hands.

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The kids are kinda creepy, in Skeppy's opinion.

They barely seem to pay attention to Skeppy at all, talking in very quiet whispers in each other's ears. When Skeppy tries to ask them a question, they'll give him a face rather than answer, as if he's being weird.

The kitchen thankfully is clean, thanks to Bad's habits of keeping up with the chores. It's a bit dim, since it's night, but the lanterns they have scattered around give a homey feeling to the room. That, with the potted plants put around and the faint smell of soup that had been for dinner earlier, it's an inviting scene.

He offers seats at the table, and watches as the two boys walk over to the chairs and sit down, the wooden legs screeching against the kitchen floor. Wilbur rests his elbows onto the table, looking around at the environment with a curious face. Techno seems curious as well, but he's mostly focused on Skeppy, watching with a bored expression that feels nearly judgmental. Skeppy hopes that's just his resting face, and he's not currently getting judged by a kid. Not that he would care. Surely a kid's opinion of him isn't that important.

Techno nudges Wilbur in the arm, and Wilbur reaches out to him, the two of them holding hands underneath the table as they lean in to whisper quietly to each other. Skeppy can barely hear their voices, let alone words.

"Could you make him some tea?" Technoblade asks, raising his head to Skeppy, who jolts and quickly stops standing in place.

"Oh- yeah, yeah, sure." Skeppy walks across the kitchen, going towards the cabinets.

Tea, alright.

Bad had said the top cabinets, but Skeppy hates the top cabinets, because those are too tall for him to reach, and he has to climb the counter to get them. But it's not like he can tell the guests that he can't make tea because he's *short*, so he sucks it up and scales the counter.

Wilbur watches Skeppy climb up with a bit of amusement, lips twitching up into a smile as the man nearly falls backwards as he opens the cabinet door to see what is on the shelves. Wilbur's a bit glad he's clearly some type of monster. The gems scattered on his face are

proof that he's not like the villagers, and the other person had clearly not been human just at a glance.

Technoblade had suggested the tea, if only because it could get Wilbur's voice to heal up a bit faster, and then if anything went south, they had a plan to fall back on. Right now, it seemed like Phil was in good hands, and there isn't any clear threat to be seen, so Wilbur will take the chance to try and get his throat to be less sore.

It still stings, painful and only letting him whisper very quietly, but he doesn't need to shout anything just yet. The only words he's whispering are to Techno's ears only, so they can chat about Phil, about this place, about the man who looks like he has diamonds glued to his skin who's currently sitting on top of the counter.

"I still have my sword, and he's not that big, do you think if I just jumped at him I could take him?" Techno says quietly, holding a hand over his mouth as he leans towards Wilbur.

Wilbur huffs, smiling. "What if your sword doesn't pierce through the rocks on his skin?" He says back, his voice a bit strained even though he's speaking so quietly.

"I could use another rock and just hit those rocks."

"Beat him with rocks."

The two of them snicker to themselves, Skeppy raising an eyebrow at them and not knowing that they're discussing ways on how to possibly kill him. It's probably better that he's not aware of it, to be honest.

Skeppy grabs a box that seems to contain tea packets, and he hops off the counter and pushes the cabinet door shut, then goes to turn on the stove for heating some water.

"Would you two be willing to change into some clean shirts while this is heating up?" Skeppy asks hesitantly, getting only blank looks in response. "Uh, I'll be right back." He

quickly goes to run down the hall.

Wilbur watches him go, and as Skeppy goes down the hall, his mind wanders to Phil, who's sleeping in a room with a stranger they're not sure they can trust. His heart clenches in fear at Wilbur being reminded of their situation, but it settles with Techno squeezing his hand.

Strangers or not, Phil needs rest, bandages, all of it. Wilbur doesn't want to lose him because they are too stubborn to take people's help. That would be one of the worst ways to lose him, for it would be their faults, then.

Leaning in towards Technoblade, Wilbur squeezes his hand in return and talks softly. "Do you think Phil is going to be okay?"

Technoblade takes a few seconds to respond, face scrunching up in worry. "I don't know. He said his necklace was magic, right? Then he's going to be fine."

"Yeah." Wilbur nods, thinking of Phil's necklace again. Phil had assured him he was going to be okay, and he'd hate for Phil to have been lying to him. He has to be okay, needs to be okay. Wilbur doesn't know what he would do if Phil died today, and he doesn't know if he can survive losing something that's become so precious in such a short time.

Tears well up at the corner of his eyes, and he snuffles, Techno tugging at his hand. He wants Phil to be okay. He hopes Phil will be okay.

"It'll be fine." Technoblade whispers, and he doesn't sound completely convinced himself, but it's good to hear his voice either way. Wilbur wipes the back of his hand at his eyes, and sighs.

Skeppy returns with two shirts, and he throws them at the table, both Techno and Wilbur leaning back as the fabric hits the wood with a quiet thump.

“Okay! Those probably won’t fit but it’s better than having you guys wear clothes that are uh- bloody.” Skeppy claps his hands together, then reaches behind him for a towel, looking at the sink. “You guys should probably wash off, and you can change in a room down the hall, maybe-”

“Get out.” Technoblade says easily, climbing off his chair as Wilbur pulls the shirts towards him, holding it up with a slight frown.

Skeppy freezes, then seems to reboot as Techno tugs the towel out of his hands, walking back over to the table to grab a chair and drag it across the floor towards the sink.

Wilbur hums, seeming satisfied with the shirts he’s been given, and he looks at Skeppy with an expectant expression, waving a hand.

Skeppy blinks slowly back at him, and hears the sink turn on, Techno having climbed onto the chair to reach over the counter more easily. “Alright then.” Skeppy says, seeming to just accept it, and walking off towards the hallway. “Yell for me when you’re done!” He waves a hand, and Techno gives a grunt in response.

“Wil, hey, come over here.” Techno says, putting the towel under running water, and watching as Wilbur climbs off his chair to join Techno’s side. Techno squeezes as much water as he can out of the towel, then leaves the water running, leaning down from where he’s kneeling on the chair and raising the towel up to Wilbur’s face.

Wilbur makes a scrunched up expression at Techno dragging a damp towel across his cheek, and he makes a questioning look towards him, grabbing onto his wrist.

“You have dirt on your nose.” Techno says, and Wilbur scoffs, the heavy feeling in his chest lifting a little.

“You have blood on *your* nose.” He whispers, pushing the towel at Techno, and it’s less of a way to try and clean it off, and more of a smack of damp cloth against Techno’s face.

Technoblade scrubs at his face, then looks up with a frown, only for Wilbur to pull the towel out of his hands and scrub at his face once more. To be fair, he scrubs a bit more than necessary, but it's funny to see Techno's unimpressed expression when he takes the towel away, his face cleaner.

Wilbur uses the towel to clean off his hands, then gives it to Techno, who runs the towel under the water again and washes his hands as Wilbur goes to change shirts.

They're simple shirts, one is a light beige color, and the other is just white. Wilbur takes the beige one and swaps it for his own, frowning at how the yellow of his sweater has been ruined with blood. It's not his own, he's glad of that, but it's still ruined either way.

He throws the shirt at Techno's face to get him to swap for cleaner clothes too, and Techno barely catches it with a startled noise, narrowing his eyes towards Wilbur, who pays him no mind since he's busy pulling a shirt over his head.

Two minutes later, they're cleaner than before, and they have new shirts on that aren't theirs. Wilbur doesn't really like the way they feel, and Techno seems unhappy with the texture too, but he supposes it's better than having something stained.

Technoblade looks down the hall, Wilbur sitting back on his chair as Techno stands by the table. Wil is about to quietly ask if they should call for Skeppy now, since the water for the tea should be heated now, but Techno beats him to it, calling down the hall.

"Is the pot supposed to be on fire?!" Techno asks, and there's footsteps coming down the hall, Skeppy speeding into the kitchen with a panic.

Once he sees the pot perfectly fine, with boiling water inside, he gives a grumpy face at Technoblade, who shrugs, and seems unbothered.

Techno goes to sit back down beside Wilbur, and Skeppy goes to make the tea. It's comfortably silent for a bit, with only the sound of cups clinking when Skeppy goes to go grab one. Techno holds Wilbur's hand under the table, and the smell of something citrus-like spreads through the kitchen.

Skeppy is able to pour a cup, place it down in front of Wilbur with it still steaming, but Wil doesn't get to take a single sip.

“SKEPPY!” Bad yells, a crash sounding out from down the hallway, and Skeppy looks up in surprise, running with a panic.

“Where are my children?!” Phil's voice rings out, angry with a clear threat.

Technoblade and Wilbur scramble to follow, eyes wide and hearts racing at something having gone wrong, and when they get to the room, they find Phil on the ground with Bad, a knife in his hand that's pointed dangerously close to Bad's face.

“What the hell- get off him!” Skeppy yells, rushing forward. Phil looks up, and dodges back from Skeppy trying to kick him off, Bad holding out a hand towards Skeppy as he scoots back.

“No, no, wait it's fine-!”

“You motherfucker-!”

“Skeppy!”

Phil leans back on one knee, holding his knife up with a scowl and his wings raising out behind him, the ends of his feathers brushing against the floor. His eyes fall onto the doorway, where Technoblade and Wilbur stare with wide eyes, and his face goes from hostile to drowning in relief within seconds.

“Dad!” Techno yells, Wilbur sprinting just a second before he does, the two of them going past where Skeppy is kneeling down beside Bad. They both run into Phil's outstretched arms, and Phil pulls them close with a sigh, his wings wrapping around them both.

“Oh, you’re okay, you’re okay.” Phil breathes out, taking in a deep breath, leaning his chin on top of their heads. “You’re both alright.” He says in clear relief, burying his face into their hair.

Bad sits back, feeling Skeppy rest a hand on his shoulder, and they both watch as Phil drops his knife gently onto the ground, solely focused on holding Wilbur and Techno to his chest.

“Did he seriously pull a knife on you?” Skeppy asks quietly, Bad smiling hesitantly.

“I didn’t know he had it on him, and he just kinda woke up and jumped at me.”

“Fucker.” Skeppy swears, and Bad smacks him across the back of his head.

“Language.”

Phil opens his eyes then, looking up at the two of them, and he narrows his eyes, twisting away from the two of them and pulling Techno and Wilbur away, his wings staying as a shield. Technoblade and Wilbur stay clinging onto him, and Phil’s glare softens when he realizes Wilbur is crying.

“Who are you?” Phil asks, serious. The knife he had is placed on the floor, but it wouldn’t be hard for him to simply grab it.

Bad sighs quietly with an awkward grin.

Chapter End Notes

\*jazz hands\*

thanks for reading :P

# Even with everything, he still chose to be kind

## Chapter Notes

:) hey

this chapter is dedicated to Mari

love u mari I know ur reading this

also moontwt wassup

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Who are *you*?” Skeppy snaps back, clearly angry at Bad getting threatened with a knife from a stranger they know absolutely nothing about. “You know, it’s a bit rude to be immediately trying to attack the people who *rescued* you-”

Bad holds a hand up, trying to calm his partner down. “No, no, Skeppy, it’s fine-”

“I’ll ask again.” Phil says quietly, and they both turn their heads to him. Phil presses Technoblade and Wilbur close to his chest, his wings curling in to keep them out of sight. He picks up the dagger he had put onto the ground, and keeps it held in his palm, the blade pointing towards them both. “Where am I, what’s going on, and *who are you*?”

Wilbur cries quietly into Phil’s arms, Phil’s face flickering between worried and stoic. Phil tries to scoot back just a bit, keeping distance from people he doesn’t know, but he can’t move too much with Techno and Wilbur clinging to him like a lifeline. He settles on just collapsing onto the ground, and keeping the knife raised.

Bad watches with curious eyes as Skeppy sends several glares towards Phil’s direction, Phil sending them right back. The kids in his arms are barely visible underneath his black

feathers, and when Phil notices where Bad's eyes are, he nearly snarls.

There's so many questions Bad wants to ask.

But it would be better if he could simmer down the situation first.

"You can call me Bad." He says, getting to his feet, and pushing Skeppy back, resting his hand onto his shoulder. "And this is Skeppy. You're in our home, in the forest that's under our watch. The village you came from isn't far."

Phil's eyes narrow, his wings shifting as he glances down to his children. He murmurs a few words of reassurance at them, before turning his attention back to Bad. "And can I ask why we're here?"

"This place is under our protection." Skeppy answers, crossing his arms over his chest. He doesn't sound anywhere near happy, but both him and Bad know this part of their duties, and they do take it seriously. "Anyone who needs refuge, they're granted it here. We found you and your kids in the forest after we chased the townspeople off."

"We brought you here, since you were bleeding out, and you and your sons looked like you needed help." Bad continues, nodding a bit with his words. He glances down at Skeppy, who seems to be focused on the wings that Phil has.

Bad watches with a tense patience as Phil seems to process their words. He seems skeptical for a moment, but then it melts into relief, his shoulders falling as he finally lowers the knife in his hands. "Oh." He looks at them again, seems to really look at them, noting their appearance, the way Skeppy stands a bit defensive, but Bad holds himself with an open air to him, a careful smile offered towards Phil's way.

There's bandages wrapped around Phil's sides, and he can notice the pull of it against his skin, the way it's obviously meant to help with his wound he had gotten earlier tonight. Techno and Wilbur seem okay, and even more, they've changed clothes, having been provided with something clean. That sight alone, of them being taken care of while Phil was unconscious, chases away a bit of distrust in his heart. "Alright, then."

He lowers his head to Technoblade and Wilbur, his wings relaxing just a bit as he puts the knife down onto the ground and hugs them both tightly. "Are you both alright?" He whispers, holding his hands to the back of their heads, pressing his forehead to Wilbur's. "Are you hurt?"

"No." Techno responds, tilting his head up as Phil goes to press his forehead against his. "Wil's voice is overused, but we're okay other than that, I think." His voice wavers as he speaks to Phil, and Phil smiles.

"Dad..." Wilbur whispers, Phil gently shushing him and telling him to rest his throat before raising his attention back to their hosts.

"It's alright, Wil." He says quietly, then looks to Bad and Skeppy. "I'm Phil." He introduces, nodding his head to them both. "These are my sons, Technoblade, and Wilbur."

"Welcome to our home." Bad smiles.

"Sorry for attacking you before."

"Oh, no, no, it's fine." Bad waves his hands, laughing a bit. "You were worried, I'm sure if I had kids, I would panic waking up without them too."

"Hm." Skeppy narrows his eyes a bit, Bad nudging him in the arm. His face shifts into something more pleasant. "Well, if introductions are out of the way, maybe you could talk to Bad for a bit while your kids can eat something?"

Techno turns his head behind him with a quiet glare, red eyes burning. Wilbur wraps his arms around Phil's neck and even without trying to pull him off, Phil knows he's not going to let go.

“Would you mind bringing the food here?” Phil asks. “I’m sorry, but they’re, ah...overprotective.”

And with that, Phil had gone from kneeling on the floor with his kids in his arms, to sitting up on the bed, Techno and Wilbur sitting right beside him, with matching bowls of soup in their little hands. Bad sits down on a chair across from them, hands clasped together on his lap. Skeppy stands behind him, almost like a silent protector, even though Bad hardly needs it.

“Me and Skeppy have lived in this forest for a long while. We’ve gotten our fair share of visitors here, usually people who are running from the town or from hunters.” Bad explains, as Phil listens intently, keeping an eye on Techno and Wilbur as well, who eat like they’re starving. Phil wipes a hand against Wilbur’s cheek, trying to rub off the remains of food. “You’re not the first ones who have passed by, and you certainly won’t be the last. I’m glad it seems like you’re all okay, though.”

“That last run-in with hunters was a bit less manageable than I’d like to admit.” Phil smiles. “We’ve had plenty of experience with them, but I suppose tonight our luck was worse than usual.”

Phil tries to figure out if these two realize who they're sitting across from. So far, it doesn't seem like there's been a hint that they've heard of Techno and Wilbur, of what they're supposed to be. He assumes maybe that they don't care, because they're hybrids as well, or maybe they don't know. Phil's not sure if they would become hostile if they knew of the prophecy that's chained to these kids, and he doesn't want to risk anything.

“It seems like hunters *have* been on the rise lately.” Bad murmurs, holding a hand to his face. “I mean, it’s been a little while since anyone has come by here, but hunters have been toeing around the treeline a lot more often.”

“As long as they stay away.” Phil says, tilting his head down. “I’m glad it’s safe here, at least. We’ve been traveling for a while, and we were supposed to rest before continuing on our way, but...well.” Then their room had gotten swarmed with hunters. Then they had to kill anyone who tried to kill them. Then it was a matter of just getting out alive with the entire town trying to hurt them.

“I have a few questions.” Skeppy says, raising a hand up. Bad gives a hesitant look behind him, not sure if now is the proper time for questions, seeing as Phil has only just woken up, and the kids beside him are finally more calmer and content than since they first found them.

“Skeppy...” Bad trails off, voice unsure. He’s dying for answers too, so he’s not putting as much effort as he should be in stopping Skeppy from an impromptu interrogation, but he should be.

“You’re an avian.” Skeppy says. But he says it with finality and the knowledge that avians aren’t supposed to be alive. The tone in his voice gives that away, the way it’s heavy with weight. “But avians, all of them-”

“Stop.” Phil cuts him off, a slight panic in his voice. Wilbur pauses from eating, raising his head up to Phil. Technoblade’s already finished his food, and he holds his bowl in his lap, looking at Bad and Skeppy and watching their slightly surprised expressions as Phil speaks with a barely noticeable waver in his voice.

Bad’s questions die off in his head as he looks at Phil’s face and finds the slightest traces of fear hidden in there. He feels a quiet guilt run down his back.

Phil holds his hands to Techno’s and Wilbur’s backs, giving a polite smile. “I think I know what you want to ask, and I’d- I’d rather not speak about that in front of them.”

Techno looks towards Phil with a worried expression. Wilbur glances at Skeppy, face scrunching up as he tries to pick apart his intentions.

“...sorry.” Skeppy mutters.

“Would you be willing to speak about it later?” Bad asks, and Skeppy turns his head to him with a baffled face. Usually he would think Bad wouldn’t step on other’s toes, wanting their guests to be comfortable, but instead Bad is looking for any other chance to know, know what happened.

Phil's face turns conflicted, and he looks at the bandages around his sides, and wraps his wings over Techno's and Wilbur's shoulders, sighing. "Maybe. I would like to have a talk with you both, but these two-" He pats both Techno and Wilbur on top of their hair. "-are my priority."

"I understand." Bad nods, and he gets up to his feet. "I do mean it when I say you're welcome here. Me and Skeppy have been welcoming those who need help for over a century."

Wilbur's eyes go a little wide, surprised at hearing that.

"You must be old, then." Techno says, and Wilbur snorts, slapping a hand to his mouth. Phil sighs fondly.

"Hey!" Skeppy huffs, putting his hands onto his hips, while Bad just nods.

"Well, I'm sure I'm much older than you, that's for sure."

"Phil's old." Wilbur says quietly, Techno grinning. Phil just huffs, amused.

"Older than you know, Wil."

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While things have simmered down and Phil's made sure everything's safe and this is actually a place they can breathe easy, it doesn't mean it's going to stay comfortable. The fact that they finally have a place to breathe easy is nice, but it's stifled with Phil's realization that these people also know of his past. First, that witch from earlier before, asking, and now-

Phil sighs. And here he thought that his past could be left behind while he worked to get a new life with his children.

He should've expected it though. Something like that takes a long, long time to truly fade into nothing. And now that more and more attention shines on him, with his kids being chained to a bullshit prophecy, dead tales will start to be passed around.

With Technoblade and Wilbur having eaten something, and the two of them content to have Phil awake, okay, and holding them both close for at least ten minutes, it's not hard for Phil to coax them to try and get some rest. Bad has enough space for each of them to have a bed, but Phil insists they're alright with the room they have, and that one bed would be enough for all three of them. He knows that Wilbur and Techno wouldn't be able to sleep alone anyway.

Bad changes the sheets on the bed, so they no longer are stained of Phil's blood from earlier, and he turns the lights down, letting it stay dim in the room with only a single blue lantern sitting on the desk. It glows with a soothing blue, and Phil watches it with a smile as Techno and Wilbur talk quietly to each other, sitting next to each other on the bed.

Their feet have been cleaned from any dirt, and both their hair has been brushed back by Phil, who had been gifted a brush from Skeppy. They're both safe once more, and as Phil goes to sit down on the bed, they give him an expectant look.

"How about you both try and get some sleep, okay?" Phil asks, pulling at the blankets to let Techno and Wilbur crawl underneath them. Techno goes to tuck his legs underneath the blanket, glad with how soft it is, but Wilbur stays sitting where he is, frowning at Phil.

"Aren't you going to sleep?" Wilbur asks, voice very low. He had gotten tea earlier, but Phil still insists he tries to hold off on speaking until his throat no longer stings.

"In a bit, mate. I want to go talk with those two who helped us, then I'll come back and sleep." Phil's words are calm and sure, but his own heart beats a bit faster at the idea of having to talk to them.

Techno frowns. "Then we'll wait until you come back, then we can sleep."

Phil huffs, getting up from the bed and leaning forward on one knee so he can press a kiss to Techno's head. "No, I want you both to get some rest. Today was a lot, and I know you must be tired." He goes to give a kiss to Wilbur's forehead as well, Wilbur blinking for a moment, then smiling with warmth.

"But you're also tired." Techno gives as a response, pointing to Phil's chest, where bandages are still wrapped around his middle underneath his borrowed shirt. Bad had given him clothes to replace the torn ones he had before, but they do fit a bit loose on him, and Phil has to roll up the sleeves.

"I slept a bit earlier!" Phil protests.

"That doesn't count." Wilbur says quietly, shaking his head.

Phil just smiles. "Well, I still would want you both to at least lay down if you're going to wait for me, okay? Go on, Wil, under the blanket."

Wilbur goes to climb in beside Techno, resting his head against the pillow, the two of them looking up at Phil.

"You better come back." Technoblade threatens, frowning just a bit.

Wilbur hesitates, then sits back up. "Can I come with you?"

"Wilbur."

"I'll be really quiet while you talk."

Phil shakes his head. "No, you should sleep, mate. Both of you."

“I’m not sleeping until you get back.” Techno declares, raising his chin as Wilbur flops back down onto the bed beside him.

“Alright. But no sneaking out of bed, okay?” Phil asks, and they both promise to stay, thankfully. Phil can’t help the smile that creeps onto his face as he goes to walk out of the room. Even with the two of them determined to stay awake until Phil comes to sleep beside them, he had seen Techno yawn on the way out. He doubts they’ll stay awake for more than ten minutes.

Skeppy and Bad are waiting for him in the kitchen, and Phil breathes in deep, then lets it out slowly, before walking down the dim hallway to go meet them there.

They’re both whispering quietly at the kitchen table, voices sharp, and Phil thinks they might be arguing, or just talking about something serious.

Bad immediately stands up out of his seat when Phil walks in. He stumbles over his words for a moment, mouth opening and closing as he stares at Phil, then- “Would you like a drink?”

“Tea?” Phil asks, and Bad immediately goes to get a cup.

Phil sits down across from Skeppy, who leans his elbows onto the table and looks at Phil with an analysing look, as if he’s trying to figure out Phil’s secrets.

Bad comes back to the table with a bit of a rush, sliding the cup over to Phil. It’s warm, and Phil takes a careful sip. It’s not bad.

They all sit in silence for a moment, Phil staring at the table before him, focused on a small groove set in the wood. He sighs quietly.

“So.” Skeppy starts. “Kids are asleep.”

“I hope so.” Phil grins. Skeppy seems like he’s about to say something else, but he doesn’t. Phil takes another sip from his cup.

“...would you mind if we ask questions?” Bad asks quietly. “I know, it’s been a long night for you, and you must want to rest, but-” Both him and Skeppy share a glance at each other.

Phil can practically see the curiosity eating them alive. He won’t lie, he’s curious too. It’s been a while since people have even realized that avians aren’t supposed to be around. With today, though, Phil wonders if word will get out, or if it’s already gotten out.

In that case, Phil’s heart is going to weigh a little more heavily. He doesn’t look forward to people knowing anything about him, but in a way, he’s trading knowledge over his past in exchange for his sons’ safety. And with a trade like that, Phil will do it in a heartbeat.

The past is painful. But even with how much Phil wishes it would just *fade*, he will watch it painfully come back to life over and over and again if it’s for his sons.

“Look.” Skeppy says. “Bad knows more than me, but from what we know, from what we had been sure of, all avians were killed centuries ago. They’re all gone.” Phil’s hands hold tightly onto the cup in his hands.

“Is that true?” Bad asks carefully. “Because- you’re here, right in front of us, and if you’re here, then there must be others, right? I thought avians were killed, but you-”

Phil sighs, and Bad stops, looking sorry.

“This isn’t really something I ever wanted to talk about.” Phil murmurs, raising his cup up to his lips. He doesn’t take a sip, just holds it here, then puts it back down. “But, with what you’ve both done today, you have saved my life, and you helped my children, so I need to pay that back somehow. And if you know that of my people, then it’s understandable that you’re curious...”

Bad frowns. “So, the avians...?” His voice holds a little bit of hope, and he leans forward, wishing for an answer that isn’t so painful. Please, let it be that they’re just in hiding. Let it be that they’ve traveled somewhere far.

Phil looks up at both of them with a soft smile. He’s lived with this information for a long time, and so he’s become a bit numb to it, but to them, he feels as if he needs to break it softly. He puts it bluntly either way. “They’re all gone. They were killed off a long time ago.”

Skeppy’s eyes widen a bit, as the words sink in. All three of them are still, and Phil takes a sip of his tea.

Skeppy leans back in his seat with a silent sigh as Bad’s expression shifts into something unreadable.

“But...” Bad trails off. “But you? *You’re* here?”

Phil smiles again, and it can only be described as sorrowful. A tired, sympathetic smile. “There isn’t anyone else *other* than me. I’ve searched, believe me. I’m the last one.”

“You can’t be sure of that.”

“I am.” Phil nods slowly.

“But that-” Bad stammers, his face falling into something broken, nearly angry. “That would make you- all this time?!”

Phil shrugs. “I’ve gotten used to it. There’s nothing else for me to do. Or rather, nothing else that I will choose to do.”

“But that means you’re the only one left.” Skeppy repeats quietly. “That’s-” cruel, he wants to say. Terribly cruel.

“What happened?” Bad asks, and it’s nearly demanding.

“What do you know of prophecies?” Phil asks, tilting his head. “The ‘real’ ones, that come from priests, magic-users.”

“They’re incredibly rare.” Skeppy says, as Bad drops his head into his hands, needing a moment to recover from the crushing truth that an entire people was wiped out, save for a single survivor. “Unpredictable as to when they appear, but they’re true in every way, from what’s been seen.”

“They’re *not*.” Phil snaps, and Bad raises his head, both of them looking surprised. “Prophecies themselves don’t mean anything, it’s the people that *make* them true.” The stories mean nothing, the rumors mean nothing if it’s never actually carried out. Would Wilbur and Techno actually go on to destroy the world if they were given a caring, loving home? What reason would they have for killing everything there is? What good is a prophecy when its words are *useless*? “Have you heard of the recent prophecy?”

“There’s a new one?” Bad asks, eyes wide.

“My sons are destined to grow up with unimaginable power and end the world as we know it.” Phil deadpans, getting slow blinks in response. “Or so people say.”

“Your-” Skeppy raises a finger towards the hallway, where Techno and Wilbur sleep. “Those kids?!”

“And one other.” Phil nods. “Three monsters, meant to carry out an apocalypse of some sort. You can imagine how most would react to hearing a prophecy like that. They would want to stop it.” Phil holds up a finger to his throat and swipes it across, Bad’s face scrunching up into disgust. “Through any means necessary.”

“They’re children.” Bad whispers.

“They are. They’re my children, now. I picked up Techno when he was small. Found Wilbur not too long ago. The third child, he’s in a town that’s a bit far from here. I plan on taking them in.”

“But they’re meant to destroy the world.” Skeppy says slowly, and it’s more of a question.

“They’ll only do that if they have a reason. What reason would they have if I take them away and raise them well? Why would they ever destroy everything if I teach them that it’s their home?”

“Huh.” Skeppy blinks. “Wait, what does this have to do with your people?”

Phil’s face pulls into a frown, and he feels a heavy weight on his chest. “Have you ever heard of the Angel of Death?” Phil asks, and the words taste bitter on his tongue.

Bad seems to think for a moment, and Skeppy just shakes his head. “I don’t think so.” Bad answers after a moment.

“It was a prophecy similar to this one.” Phil says quietly. “History repeats itself.” He mutters. “When people are scared, they do drastic things. Right now, they want to kill three children for a chance at saving the world from an end they’re not even sure will come true. Back then,” Phil pauses. “Back then, there was another prophecy.”

Bad leans back in his chair with a patient look, and Skeppy lowers his eyes to stare at the table as Phil chokes out the reason as to why his people died.

Back then, there was a new prophecy that swept through the lands. A new threat that could rise up, specific to the avian species.

The so-called Angel of Death. Someone who would become dangerous, kill thousands upon thousands, with pitch black wings and a bloody sword.

Rumors spread. People became fearful. It was said the Angel of Death would kill without mercy, it was said that they would slaughter without hesitation, leaving a path of blood behind them. A threat to the lands, to the people.

So then the search began. At first it had just been a few. Just a few avians singled out, ones with too much of a temper, too much of a threat. Then it was anyone who knew how to fight well, then those who were capable of being dangerous.

At first, they were just locked up. But then it became apparent that too many avians were being locked away, their feathers snipped, and when you take someone's freedom, they're bound to fight for it back. Conflicts rose up, and when avians fought back, it had apparently confirmed people's fears.

So then it got worse.

Then it was anyone who could be deemed a threat. But that list, that list of avians that could be deemed a threat kept growing, more and more until it was almost baffling, until *children* were on the list, because what if they grow up to be a threat? What if they grow up to be the Angel of Death?

And it only became worse.

Phil knows what it's like to be hunted.

And he also knows what it's like to watch as others are shot out of the sky, what it's like to watch as loved ones get their wings hacked off, what it's like to *watch*, no choice but to either run or die alongside them.

He knows how it's like, to be on the run, flying to somewhere that might be safe, and then-

Then it's not safe, and people he knew, he had to see them fall-

Phil leans forward, pressing his forehead to the table, tea forgotten. His wings are held tightly to his back as his words die in his throat for a moment. Skeppy stares at him with a horrified expression, and Bad holds a hand to his face, gasping a bit as he cries.

There's only one reason as to why Phil is still alive. He's been shot out of the sky before. He survived, and then didn't have a single mark to prove it.

"This is why." Phil says, holding up his necklace, watching it glow underneath his fingertips. "It's enchanted with something I couldn't even explain. My-" Phil pauses. "Someone I loved made it for me, and she thought it would at least help if I got hurt. She overcompensated a bit, I think." He smiles sadly.

*'It'll keep you safe.'* He remembers even now, her voice telling him. Gods, how he misses her.

At least she hadn't died alone, like so many.

Kristin died with Phil holding her close, and she died with the absolute joy that the thing she made for him had *worked*. Both of them, shot out of the sky, and yet Phil would forever be alright.

"It- It's kept me alive. Even after so long, I'm still here." Phil murmurs.

"And-" Skeppy clears his throat. "And everyone else?"

"Were eventually killed. I became the last one because I wouldn't die. And in a way, I think the prophecy was supposed to be true, there." Phil traces his finger over his necklace, the

heart forever glowing red. “I was angry. I didn’t have a way to die, but I had a sword and the knowledge that all of my people were murdered.”

Phil had become the Angel of Death. He was the only one with wings left, the only one able to pick up a sword. That title was his, and he could never take it off, nor give it away.

So he accepted that title.

But he didn’t accept the actions that were supposed to come with it.

“I went into hiding for a long while.” Phil says quietly, voice tired. “Killing everyone else as a revenge, that would have been carrying out the prophecy. That would have made it true. Maybe I should’ve followed it.” Phil leans back, closing his eyes. “I didn’t. I hid and ran and stayed hidden until they thought they had done it. Until word got out that the threat was gone, and the Angel of Death was gone as well.”

“Then what?” Skeppy asks, Bad wiping at his face, his shoulders shaking as he cries again. Skeppy pays him no mind, letting him cry in peace. “They get away with *doing* something like that?”

“Everyone who was ever a part of that shitshow is long gone to time, mate.” Phil sighs. “Even if I decided today to take revenge, they’re all dead and gone anyway.”

And then, it was just Phil figuring out how to be in the world again. How to walk without the threat on his shoulders of being killed for being alive.

And then,

“I don’t want revenge, though.” Phil says. “I want to prevent it from happening again. Because it’s going to happen again.” Not at the scale of all his people being hunted down and killed, but it is still history repeating itself. “Those kids sleeping in the room down the hall, they’re being hunted as we speak, just for being alive. I refuse to let them be killed.”

Bad takes a sharp breath in, rubbing at his eyes. "Can we help?" He asks, voice wavering. "Skeppy-" Bad snuffles.

"We can help, Bad." Skeppy nods, Bad nodding and crying even more. Skeppy looks at Phil. "If there's anything we can do, let us know. We've lived in relative peace in this forest for a long while. I don't mind disrupting the peace for a bit if it's for something like this."

"Thank you." Phil whispers. "That means more than you know."

"Oh, I-" Bad makes a sad noise, breathing in deeply and trying to brush off the last of his tears. "I've- For a while, I used to travel around to try and figure out what happened to your people, and all I ever found was just scraps of how they lived. I-I have something that you can have, if you want."

Phil waits for Bad to catch his breath, smiling. "I suppose I'll see."

"Okay." Bad huffs, trying to breathe. "Okay. Follow me." Bad gets up from his seat, sniffing once more and walking down the hall, Phil getting up to follow him. They walk past the room where Wilbur and Techno are sleeping, and instead go into a room where each wall is filled with books.

Piles of books are on the ground, papers in a somewhat organized chaos, pens scattered on the desk that sits to the side. Phil blinks a bit and takes it all in. Bad just goes to search through a pile of books, taking only a minute to grab one with a deep green cover.

"It had been in bad shape when I found it, but I rewrote the entire thing by hand into a new book." Bad says, holding it out to Phil. "I hope that's alright."

Phil stares at the book offered out to him, and he takes it from Bad's hands, turning it over to look at the cover. It's blank, just a simple dark green, so he opens it up, skimming through the words.

It's a book for healing remedies. Recipes for cures, for medicine.

It's a book that was specifically made by his people.

He remembers these medicines. Remembers how they had been so common for his folk, people always knowing it by heart.

"This-" Phil pauses, mouth clicking shut. This is everything to him. Not just because he now has a piece from before, in his hands, in good shape, but this means he can use it.

Can teach it, even. Maybe Techno and Wil could know these by heart one day.

"I have more." Bad admits quietly, Phil closing the book in his hands, eyes wide. "Several more. You can have them all, since they're all yours."

"I-I don't-" Phil stammers. "I don't know where I would put them."

"Well." Bad hums, looking around the room. "When you have all your children together, maybe you guys could move somewhere safe. And you could keep it in your home then."

In his home.

Phil closes the book quietly, remembering that, yes, that's the goal. To take these children away and make a home.

His heart fills with hope at the idea of that. The last child, though.

“Bad.” Phil says, Bad raising his head. “The last kid that I need to get to- he’s far from here. And I hate to admit this, but it’s hard to travel while trying to keep Techno and Wilbur safe. Hunters keep following our trail, and I just-” Phil hesitates. “I don’t know if I can trust you with this, but with what you’ve said, and with what I’ve seen-”

“They can stay here till you return with your last kid.” Skeppy says, leaning into the doorframe as Phil and Bad turn their heads to him. “They’ll be safe.”

“Oh, I wouldn’t mind at all!” Bad nods, clasping his hands together. “If it means it’d be easier for you to save the last one, then by all means, they can stay.”

“Would it be alright?” Phil asks, his voice frailer than he wants it to be.

“Me and Skeppy have been watching over this forest for over a century.” Bad grins, and when Phil looks up, he finds glowing eyes staring at him. Bad is a good person, but when he looks like that, even Phil is sure that he could be a bit dangerous. “There won’t be a single person who can hurt them.”

“You swear?” Phil asks.

“*I swear.*” Bad speaks with something unnatural twisted into his words, and Skeppy just laughs.

---

Phil still needs time to think about it.

It seems like a good choice. The boys may not like it, with Phil having to leave for a bit, but he has a feeling they’ll forgive when he comes back with their new brother.

He walks back to his room with the new book in his hands, and he opens the door quietly, closing it behind him.

Technoblade and Wilbur are sleeping soundly, quiet snores reaching Phil's ears as he goes to put the book down on the desk. He pauses, resting his palms onto the table.

He's so close. Now he has help, now he's so close to his goal. Then, it's to find somewhere safe, and then-

Phil won't lie. He's excited for a simple life of trying to raise three kids who will most likely drive him crazy.

His heart feels fond as he turns back towards Wil and Techno, watching them both sleep peacefully. He goes to join them, careful to not jostle them too much. It's futile, though, once they realize Phil's back, they're both up, and they grab out with reaching hands towards him.

"Dad, Techno fell asleep." Wilbur whispers, Phil snickering as he scoots back, laying down on the bed with Wilbur resting against his chest. Technoblade curls up at Phil's side, Phil keeping an arm wrapped around him as Techno shoves his face into his neck.

"Did he?" Phil whispers back.

"You took too long." Technoblade mutters, yawning. "I was tired."

"Go to sleep, mate." Phil says softly. Techno hums. "Goodnight, you two."

"G'nite."

"Goodnight."

Phil smiles, closing his eyes with them, and knowing for a fact that while the past was cruel, his future will be precious. He sleeps with a smile.

## Chapter End Notes

Man I can't wait for the domestic homelife arc. It's gonna be so fun to write YEAHHHH  
also ooooh Tommy coming up soon hehehe  
thanks for reading!!

# Promises

## Chapter Notes

This chapter is dedicated to my best friend Mari :P

Enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Phil wakes up with a small knee digging into his gut and not-so-quiet whispers over his head.

He had been hoping to wake up slowly, peacefully, from maybe some sort of dream, but instead he gets his kids trying to do *something* while he's 'asleep'. While Phil's first instinct is to open his eyes and see what the heck they're up to, he stays still, and keeps his eyes shut. Mostly because he's still a bit tired, and also he wants to try and figure out what they're even doing, trying to sneak around Phil.

"*Shh.*" Technoblade holds a finger over his mouth, trying to help Wilbur climb over Phil, since Wilbur had been sleeping on the other side of the bed, and Phil is blocking the way. "You're going to wake him up."

"You pulled me too hard!" Wilbur whispers back, and Phil can feel his weight shift, carefully moving over Phil to go towards Phil's right, where Techno seems to be on his feet already off of the bed. "I think I woke him up." Wilbur mumbles.

"No, he's sleeping." Technoblade insists, trying to get Wilbur to move already, rather than linger. "Look, he still has his eyes closed." Phil resists the urge to laugh a little, with how Technoblade stresses his words.

"I accidentally hit him with my knee."

“Then don’t do it again.” Technoblade deadpans.

“I didn’t *mean* to do it.” Wilbur huffs, annoyed. Phil shifts his wings from underneath him. “He’s awake!” He can feel Wilbur’s weight balancing precariously on the edge of the bed. He wonders if Wilbur is just standing near the edge of the mattress.

“No, he isn’t.” Techno says back. Phil feels a finger poke at his face. He tries his best to not flinch, and to keep a smile at bay. It’s nearly impossible. “Wait.” Another poke. “No, he’s sleeping.”

“Is he?” Wilbur asks, and Phil takes that moment to snap his eyes open and sit up with a rush. He sees Wilbur standing next to him, on the edge of the bed like he thought, and he wraps an arm around Wilbur’s middle and yanks him down, ignoring the little scream of surprise that comes with it. “He’s awake! He’s awake!” Wilbur yells, kicking his legs as he’s pulled in, held hostage by Phil’s arms.

“Gotcha!” Phil grins, Wilbur squealing and trying to slap his hands up towards Phil’s face. Phil just leans back, snickering a bit. “Where’s Techno? Where’d he go?” He looks off the side of the bed, and finds that Techno is nowhere to be found. The door is closed shut, though, and he heard Techno just a moment prior.

“I don’t know!” Wilbur lies, and he dissolves into giggles as Phil tickles him in response. He stays unyielding of any info as to where Techno has gone, though, so Phil just keeps one arm wrapped around the kid to keep him trapped, and he leans off the side of the bed, looking down towards the floor.

Technoblade looks back with wide eyes, kneeling down on the ground with a stance that reminds him of a startled animal. “There you are.” Phil says, Technoblade making a face like he’s been caught in the act.

“Uh-” He tries to get away, Phil leaning off the bed and grabbing him around the torso too, heaving him up with him and Wilbur. He shrieks as Phil pulls him up.

“What are you two doing? What were you doing?” Phil demands, holding them both close and snickering as they both frantically try to get away. They yell as they get trapped with a wall of feathers, Phil’s wings wrapping around them both. Wilbur sneezes.

This, right here, is everything that Phil will ever fight for. His heart is impossibly full as he holds two struggling kids in his arms, trying to run away from getting caught in-- whatever they were doing.

“What *were* you doing, actually?” Phil asks, pulling his wings back a bit, just as Wilbur tries to bite his feathers in an attempt to escape. Phil snorts at the way Wilbur snaps his mouth open and closed in an empty threat.

“We were trying to let you sleep.” Technoblade gives, kicking and struggling one last time before going limp, laying against Phil as a dead weight. “Wilbur woke you up.” He complains, seeming disappointed, just a bit.

“No, I didn’t!” Wilbur responds, twisting in Phil’s grip so he can face Techno. “You poked him awake.”

“I was checking if he was asleep.”

“By *poking* him?”

Phil huffs, resting his chin onto Techno’s hair. “You both could’ve woken me up, mate, I don’t need more rest.”

Wilbur makes a sound that’s clearly disagreeing. “No, you said that you heal faster if you’re asleep.” He tilts his head up at Phil, grey eyes narrowed at him, a tiny glare challenging Phil to just try and disagree.

“I’m already healed, Wil.” Phil reassures. “I’m all patched up, I’m much better now.”

“You got stabbed.” Technoblade reminds.

“I got better.”

“I think you should go back to sleep.” Wilbur nods, hitting a hand at Phil’s chest. “Me and Technoblade can go get food, and then you can take a nap.”

“Yeah, that sounds good.” Technoblade agrees, nodding along.

Phil scoffs a bit. “Really. I’m okay. I don’t need to rest anymore.” He lets go of them both, leaning back on the bed. He gets matching faces of doubt towards him.

“I think you should go back to bed.” Technoblade suggests, poking at Phil’s knee.

“Yeah, you look *really* tired.” Wilbur nods, Phil rolling his eyes. “Like, very tired. You need lots of sleep.”

“I’m okay.” Phil turns and swings his feet off the bed, ignoring the way Wilbur and Techno’s face go slightly panicked. Technoblade tries to grab onto his arm and lies down on the bed to keep Phil from getting up. “Look, why don’t we go have Bad check on my bandages, and then we’ll see if I still need to rest, okay?” Phil knows for a fact the wound has already been healed. His necklace has simmered down, no longer glowing bright red, and he doesn’t feel any sort of ache of an unhealed injury on his side.

However, the kids don’t seem so confident in Phil’s healing abilities.

“Nope!” Wilbur tries to make a grab for Phil’s wings, only getting gently smacked in the face with feathers. “No, no, you’re really tired!”

“Hm, don’t think so.” Phil grins, and he stands up, Wilbur nearly falling off the bed so he can quickly run and get in front of Phil, holding his arms out.

“I’ll use my voice!” Wilbur threatens, Technoblade whining as he tries to hold onto Phil’s arm, half hanging off the bed.

“No, give your voice a rest, you still sound raspy.” Phil says sternly, and Wilbur makes a face like he’s slightly guilty, his mouth staying shut. Instead, he holds his hands out, trying to push Phil backwards.

Phil barely budes, and he fails to keep a smile back, easily walking forward even with how much Wilbur is attempting to keep him from going anyway. Wilbur’s feet slide across the floor, and Technoblade is still hanging onto his arm, stumbling behind Phil as he tries to pull the avian back. He resorts to grabbing onto Phil’s leg instead, holding on like an octopus, shoving his face into Phil’s leg.

“No, nuh-uh!” Wilbur protests, trying to push back and failing miserably. Phil pauses for a second, then reaches down and picks him up with both arms, lifting Wilbur over his shoulder and carrying him there. Wilbur kicks his legs, making a frustrated noise as he tries to hit Phil’s back with tiny fists. “No! Go lay down!”

“Let’s go see what we can have for breakfast.” Phil says, making his way towards the door, dragging Techno with his foot and carrying a kicking Wilbur on his shoulder.

“No! Phil! Go sit *down*-!”

He comes across Skeppy in the hallway, who just stands to the side in a doorway with a perplexed face, Phil just shrugging.

“Kids.” Phil says, like that’s a proper explanation. Skeppy just holds his hands up, his face a clear sign that he wants no part of it, and he turns around to just walk into the room.

Phil is able to make it to the kitchen, with a bit of difficulty, since he has two kids trying their very best to not let him keep walking. Wilbur is just laying limp now, but he's still protesting very loudly, giving his opinion on Phil escaping the room. Phil stops and looks down at Techno, who still holds on for dear life, stuck to Phil's leg.

"This is bullshit!" Wilbur swears, Phil choking on a laugh. He thinks he can feel Techno snort against his leg.

There's a clatter of something falling to the floor, and Phil looks up to find Bad in the kitchen by the counters, face appalled. He sputters, reaching down to pick up a fork, and carrying it to the sink to wash it. "*Language!* And good morning."

"Mornin'." Phil chimes. "Help?" He gestures to Technoblade still stuck on his leg, and Bad blinks a bit. "They still think I should be resting."

"Well, maybe you should, if they're so insistent." Bad smiles, putting the fork away and turning to the stove, where there seems to be food cooking. "You were hurt just yesterday."

"I'm fineee." Phil drawls, leaning down to put Wilbur back on his feet. Wilbur stands with his arms crossed and an upset expression on his face, and Techno raises his head towards him. "They're just worried."

"Wil, Wilbur." Technoblade whispers, and Wilbur gets with the program near instantly, quickly dropping to the ground and taking Phil's other leg hostage, even with how Phil tries to step back and prevent it.

"Ahg, no!" Phil exclaims, Bad looking behind him to see Phil sigh with a defeated expression. "You two, get up."

"No." Technoblade responds simply, and Wilbur seems happy with that being their answer.

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“Well, I can confidently say that your dad is going to be just fine.” Bad smiles, standing up straight and putting the pile of old bandages to the side. Phil’s injury has already faded off into a light mark on his skin, like Phil expected it to. The bandages are hardly needed now, and Phil is perfectly fine, ready to go.

Wilbur and Techno are both eating their breakfast in small bowls, cut up pieces of pancakes with some syrup mixed in. They’re sitting at the kitchen table, across from where Phil had been getting checked by Bad.

Phil tugs his shirt down and leans back in his seat with a smile, looking towards Wilbur and Techno to find that Wilbur is stabbing his pancakes with a frown, and Technoblade squints his eyes towards Phil’s direction, as if he’s suspicious if Phil is actually healed or not.

“Are you sure?” Wilbur asks, chewing on his food.

“Yes, I’m very sure. Phil is all healed up!”

“Magic.” Phil waves his hands in the air, and he sounds like he’s joking, but he knows that’s the truth.

“Hm.” Technoblade shakes his head. “I still think Phil should take a nap.”

“I agree.” Wilbur nods, Phil rolling his eyes fondly.

“I don’t need it.” Phil insists. “I’m alright, really. My necklace helped, like I said it would.” Phil holds up the necklace in question for a moment, before tucking it underneath his shirt, like how he always has it.

“Mn.” Technoblade makes a vague noise, chewing on his food with an unhappy expression. “But you were *bleeding*. A lot.”

“I can’t stay hurt, mate. I heal faster than others, a lot faster. I know, yesterday, it was bad...” Phil trails off, Wilbur staring at him with too much behind his eyes. Phil can’t handle the sad look that’s held in them. “But I’m ok now. And I’ll always be okay.”

“Are you sure?” Techno asks, staring down at his plate and poking at his food.

“I’m sure. I’ve survived through worse, don’t worry. I’m durable.”

Technoblade doesn’t look entirely convinced, but he seems satisfied, and he nods. He turns to Wilbur, who looks back at him, and they seem to say something to each other silently, through their eyes.

Wilbur turns to Phil. “You better be careful from now on.” It’s a quiet threat.

“I’ll try my best.” Phil promises.

“It’s not *your* fault you got hurt, anyway.” Technoblade points out, pushing his plate away, leaning back in his seat. “It’s because of the hunters.”

“They’re shit.” Wilbur sings-songs, and Phil gives him an incredulous look, hearing Bad sputter again from where he was doing dishes and trying to give them space.

“Language!”

Phil holds back a snort. He’s heard Wilbur swear a few times before, having picked up words from when before Phil had found him. He’s not going to tell the kid to stop swearing, if anything he finds it funny, for a kid so tiny to be swearing with such fury. He’s gently told Wilbur before to refrain from certain words at certain times, but overall, Phil thinks it’s hilarious.

“They’re persistent. I feel like it’s gotten worse with each time, with them trying to find you both.” Phil frowns, leaning his elbows on the table. “It was a close call yesterday.”

“I killed a few.” Technoblade says, just as Skeppy walks into the kitchen.

Skeppy blinks. “What?!”

Bad is in the same state, having turned off the sink to turn around and look with a worried expression. Phil just sighs softly.

“I’m sorry you had to do that, Techno.”

“I mean, I’m not *sad* about it.” Technoblade says, nearly sassy with his tone. “I kinda think they deserved it, I mean, they were trying to kill you and Wilbur.”

“I think they deserved it.” Wilbur agrees, scooting up in his seat. He holds a finger up. “If they didn’t want to die, then they shouldn’t have tried to kill us!”

“Very true.” Phil nods, smiling, and Skeppy turns around and walks back out. Bad follows with a bit of a frantic speed to his steps. He’s not one to go killing people, if anything Bad prefers to not kill anyone, but he knows that Phil’s reasons make sense. And he knows that if they were backed into a corner, then it’s reasonable.

Phil watches Bad scurry away with a huff, and he looks back to Wilbur and Technoblade. “I wanted to talk to you two about something.”

They lift their heads with curiosity, Wilbur still eating the last of his breakfast. Techno slides his plate to Wilbur, and Wilbur takes it without a word, eating what’s left in there.

“First, what happened yesterday, I don’t want it to happen ever again. That was too close. I wasn’t able to do anything, I couldn’t protect you.” Things could’ve gone so much worse,

and Phil is grateful that this forest was protected like they were told. The idea of waking up, Technoblade and Wilbur gone while Phil had been powerless to stop it-

It leaves a terrible feeling on his chest.

"I'm sorry for that." Phil says. Wilbur chews slowly at his food with a thoughtful look, and Technoblade just snorts.

"We'll be okay, dad." Technoblade says, and Phil's heart squeezes. "Me and Wilbur are supposed to get stronger, right? Then you don't have to worry about it, because I'll be able to fight them off, and Wilbur will be able to use his voice. We can protect *you*." He seems confident in his words, and Phil doesn't doubt his claim for a second. He remembers what that witch had told him before.

While his kids don't have to destroy the world, they definitely have the capacity to. They'll grow up to have the *power* to do that, to cause the apocalypse. And while the idea of them being safe with their own abilities is comforting, they're not quite there yet.

Quietly, Phil wonders if all of this will be enough to stop the apocalypse from ever happening, if it'll somehow be triggered either way.

No, Phil refuses to let that happen.

Phil refuses to have his kids end up in that fate.

"You're not strong right now, though." Phil reminds him gently. "You're still a kid. You're still young, and I don't want you to fight. I want this to be over, so we can go somewhere safe."

"Somewhere safe?" Wilbur asks, face scrunching up.

“Once I have your brother, and we’re all together again, we can go somewhere else.” Phil tells him, clapping his hands together on the table, keeping his voice level and almost hopeful. “Somewhere to hide out, and not have to worry about hunters, and all of that. No more running.”

Wilbur makes a sound that could almost be a scoff. “No more- Where would we even hide?” Wilbur’s been running his whole life, always found out, always sold out, nowhere is safe, in his mind.

But then again, Phil is safe. Then again, Phil would never sell him out, so this is different. New.

“There’s places to go, mate.” Phil smiles. “But before we can think about that, I need to go.”

“We need to go.” Technoblade corrects, raising an eyebrow. “For the last kid, right?”

Phil nods. “Yes. But I mean what I said.” He pauses a bit, watching both Wilbur and Techno blink at him, their faces morphing into something of the start of panic. “I’m going to go get him, alone. You both are staying here.”

Wilbur’s face falls into something like horror, and he drops his fork into his bowl, eyes wide. “No.” He breathes out, and Phil’s heart breaks a little. He nearly takes back his words right there.

“Hell no!” Technoblade yells, slamming his hands onto the table. Phil is a bit taken back by that one. “You can’t go on your own!”

“You said you were staying!” Wilbur accuses.

“You’ll get hurt if you’re alone!” Technoblade protests.

“Boys.” Phil says.

“No, you’re not leaving! No!” Wilbur shakes his head, his hands curling into fists. “You said you weren’t going to leave us-!”

“We can still do it like how we have been doing it, traveling together-!” Technoblade insists, nearly desperate. “We’ll be really careful-!”

“-you *promised*-!”

“*Boys.*” Phil stands up, his voice heavy and serious. His wings fold out a bit, making him seem a bit bigger than he really is, and both Techno and Wilbur stare up at him, matching tears in their eyes. “Listen.” He says more softly. Wilbur’s already crying.

Phil makes his way around the table, quickly going to them both. He picks up Technoblade out of his seat and sits down on the ground, pulling Wilbur down with him as well. He holds them both close, letting them cling on tightly.

“Listen,” Phil starts again, speaking softly. “What happened yesterday will happen again, if we all keep moving like how we have been. People are looking for us, looking for you both. It’s going to get harder and harder to run away. It’s safer if you both stay here, and I go on my own.” He leans down, brushing his chin on top of Wilbur’s hair. “I don’t have to leave right away. I could go tomorrow. But if I go on my own, it’ll be *safer*, and faster. I’ll come back as fast as I can, and when I get back, you’ll have a new little brother.”

“But I don’t want you to leave.” Wilbur chokes out, his face hidden in Phil’s shirt. “And what if you don’t come back? What if you get attacked on the way there?”

“You could get hurt.” Technoblade mumbles. “You could get hurt by hunters, and you could get caught, or killed-”

“I can’t die, Techno.” Phil says gently. “My necklace, remember? No matter what happens, I’ll be alright.”

“You don’t know that.” Wilbur says quietly, and Phil holds them both a little tighter. “You don’t know.”

“I know that I’m going to save the last kid, and I’m going to take you all somewhere safe so we can have a home. Look at me.” Phil holds one hand to each of their faces, makes them look up. They’re both crying, faces scrunched up and wet with tears. “I’ll come back. I promise I’ll come back. There is nothing that can stop me from coming back to you both. It’ll only be for a short while, then there won’t be any reason for me to leave you ever again.”

Phil can’t have it all be lost now. Not when he’s so close. Not when he’s so close to finally having it all.

Anyone who would dare stand in his way of finally having his kids safe and together, he will kill them without a second thought.

Phil leans down close to both their faces, trying hard to keep it together himself. “I know you both don’t want me to leave. I know you’ll be worried.”

“I can’t *lose*—” Wilbur starts, his voice breaking off in a sob.

“I’m not abandoning you. I’m not, I swear. I’ll be back, I will be back. I will fight to come back to you, I promise you.” Phil swallows, biting at the inside of his cheek before going on. “If you really, *really* don’t want me to, then I won’t. If you can’t have me leave, then I won’t go. We can travel together, like we did before. But, I want you both to consider, because if we go out, and keep going like how we have been—” Phil stops, his voice wavering too much. He takes a moment to clear his throat. “-I could lose you both.”

Technoblade closes his eyes, holding onto the front of Phil’s shirt tightly.

“What happened last night will happen again. It’ll happen again, and I know you’re both strong, you’re both so strong-”

But Phil can’t always stay watching. Phil can’t always be there, always be on guard. Phil, even with all his efforts, has a limit, has a breaking point and he can’t risk that chance.

“-but I can’t protect you.” Phil whispers, and he chokes back tears. “There might be a time where I can’t be there to save you, or help you, and I can’t let that happen, so I’m asking you to please, just consider it.”

Wilbur tucks his head underneath Phil’s, his hand holding on tightly to Techno’s. Technoblade tilts his head down, shoulders shaking a bit as he tries to lean in even more into Phil’s arms.

“*Please.*” Phil barely breathes out, and he feels like he’s pleading with the universe, rather than his kids. He feels like he’s asking for a chance, for a small chance for all of this to be okay.

Phil is asking for fate to please, be kind to him just this once.

Just this once.

They both sit quietly, together on the floor for a long while, until-

“You don’t have to go right away, right?” Wilbur says quietly, and he squeezes Techno’s hand in his. Techno squeezes back.

“No.”

“...we can wait until tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow.” Phil nods, just a bit.

Wilbur sniffs, one arm wrapped around Phil’s waist in a hug, and he presses his face more into Phil’s shirt, like he’s trying to hold on for dear life.

“And you’ll come back.” Wilbur whispers. “You’ll return back with a little brother.”

“Yes.”

“And you’ll be careful?” Techno asks. “Promise you’ll be careful.”

“I promise.” Phil says it without hesitation.

Both Techno and Wilbur think it over in their minds.

They both know, in their hearts, that if they go with Phil, they become a danger. Phil wants to protect them, and he’s stupid for that. It puts him in danger with that.

They can’t *have* that.

And then again, they can’t bear to let him leave.

But when faced with those two choices, letting him leave and have it be safer, or going with him and making it be more of a danger, because of them...?

Technoblade lets out a shaky sigh. “You have to come back.” He says. “You will come back.”

“Nothing can stop me from returning to you two.” Phil smiles. “Nothing in the world.”

Wilbur lets out a little laugh. “You’re such an idiot, dad.”

“Hey.” Phil says, and Technoblade lets out a huff.

“You’re such an idiot.” Wilbur mutters. “I love you.” He says, nearly too quiet to hear.

Phil laughs a little, but it sounds more like a sob. “I love you too. I love you both, okay? I love you both so much.”

“You’re going to return.” Technoblade says, nearly making it sound like a threat, and Phil just nods. “When you get back, you have to give us both hugs, for a whole hour.”

“Two hours.” Wilbur adds.

“Three.” Technoblade challenges.

“Whatever you want.” Phil grins. “Are you really alright with me going?”

“As long as you come back.” Wilbur nods. “*You’ll come back.*”

His voice echoes and swirls around the three of them, magic in every syllable. Technoblade squeezes Wilbur’s hand.

Phil hardly even notices the fact Wilbur’s woven a command onto him. He hardly notices, because there was no chance of him ever leaving for good. The command is useless, because

Phil would return no matter what.

“There’s one more thing.” Phil says, and he can feel them both tense up in his arms, preparing for bad news. “You’re going to have a new little brother.”

Silence sits in the air for a moment.

“Don’t you think he needs a name, for when he gets here?”

Both Technoblade and Wilbur snap their heads up at Phil, wide eyes. They’re still a mess of tears, still sniffing and trying to not sob all over again, but with that news, it puts a new bit of hope into them. Another assurance that Phil is going to return.

After a few minutes of calming down, and Phil giving a few more promises to them both, Phil picks them up off the floor, and they go to look through books for names.

Phil sits on the bed with Techno and Wilbur leaning back against him, the two of them bickering lightly over the book in their hands. There’s books scattered around them, storybooks with characters names, ideas for something that could fit their new addition for the family.

Technoblade insists on the name ‘Theseus’, from a story he once read.

Wilbur says it’s too serious. (And dumb. Phil gently scolds him.) He says that it should be ‘Thomas’, instead.

They both settle on the name ‘Tommy’. (They both quietly think it’s a nickname for the name they chose.)

\*holds up knife\* No, Phil is not going to get attacked and Die and never come back from retrieving Tommy. This is MY story, dammit, and WE ARE GETTING THAT DOMESTIC HOMELIFE ARC, BITCHES

Sorry for that, haha, but I know a lot of you are a bit too ready for angst and I can tell you, I am not one for character death. I cannot deal with that. I am weak, and fragile, I need fluff. Why do you think I wrote these stories. To get more fluff. This fandom drowns in angst everyday, my god.

Thanks for reading! Tommy is coming up soon :)

# New arrivals

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Phil is glad that he's gotten Wilbur and Techno on board with the new plan, because it lets Phil breathe just a little easier. Bad and Skeppy practically saved his life and helped out when they needed it, and right now the timing is urgent. Phil will be away for just a short period of time, and the forest seems well protected, a good spot for them to stay hidden while he's away.

Although, even with the forest being safe, Skeppy and Bad being honest and confident in their abilities with any new-coming hunters, and the kids being mostly ok with it, it doesn't quiet down the little voice in Phil's head that insists he shouldn't leave. Maybe he could stay for a few days longer, or-

That's not really an option here, though. His mind shuts that down quickly.

Phil knows that he can't dawdle, and he has to leave as soon as possible, even with the nagging feeling in his chest that makes it hard to go.

The kids are not helping with his internal conflicts.

Wilbur's made it a personal mission to constantly be holding Phil's hand at all times. Until the moment Phil leaves, he's decided to stay clinging to the avian like a barnacle, his grip never faltering. He's only let go of him once throughout the day, and that was to just switch hands. If at any moment Phil tries to pull away, Wilbur will narrow his eyes at him like he's committed a crime, and Phil has to smile and try not to wither underneath an 8-year-old's angry glare.

Technoblade keeps trying to hide underneath Phil's wings, hands grabbing onto the back of his shirt. Which, Phil isn't going to protest to, (he really can't protest to either of their demands, especially with the threat of tears from both of them) but it's a bit hard to walk around with a kid sticking close behind him, tugging at his feathers every now and then.

Phil's given up on getting anywhere around the house, and instead stays sitting on the floor in his room. He has no choice but to ask for Bad to help out with his packing for the trip, since Wilbur's upgraded to clinging onto his arm, and Technoblade has decided to take a nap underneath Phil's wings.

At one point, Skeppy poked his head into the room to check if their guests needed anything, and was met with the sight of seeing Phil sprawled out on the floor in defeat, with two little monsters deciding he's a pillow. Skeppy just brought him a glass of water, and Bad put the satchel for Phil's trip to the side of the doorway. They both seemed to decide to just leave Phil to his fate.

Phil supposes this is just his life now, for the next ten hours or so. Forced to lay on the ground, trapped underneath the weight of the two most 'fearsome' monsters in the land.

But really, Phil doesn't get how anyone could think Technoblade is scary with the kid clinging to his side like an octopus. He's laying on top of Phil's feathers, which is maybe a bit uncomfortable, but it's a reasonable sacrifice in Phil's opinion, if it means Techno won't have to sulk around for the rest of the day.

Wilbur is honestly just laying on top of Phil at this point, Phil not even making an attempt to push him off. He might be asleep, actually, with his arms wrapped around Phil's neck. His knee keeps kicking into Phil's stomach, and Phil wonders if this is something he's going to have to suffer through again when he gets back.

Phil's sure that Techno is asleep. He can hear him quietly snoring, and his ear flicks every now and then in that way that it always does when he's dreaming. Either way, it's a heartwarming sight, Phil being squished by two kids with no sense of personal space.

Phil takes the moment to realize just how...clingy, these kids are.

He wonders if the third kid is going to be just as clingy. (He wouldn't really complain if so.)

Phil sleeps on the floor for that night, with blankets and pillows thrown around them to cushion the ground. Wilbur and Techno stay close beside him for the whole night.

Wilbur keeps humming while half-asleep, eyes opening and closing as he trails a finger across Phil's palm, tracing the lines there. His head is resting in the crook of Phil's elbow, and it's cutting off circulation a bit, his arm falling asleep. Phil doesn't dare to move though. Wil just continues tracing his hand, and Phil can feel Wilbur's claws, just barely against the tips of his fingers. Wilbur spends a solid ten minutes just humming and poking at Phil's palm, until he lays his hand up against Phil's and finally falls asleep like that.

Technoblade is a bit more awake than Wilbur, and he stays kneeling beside Phil's head, grabbing at his hair. He brushes through it with his fingers, like he's going to try and braid it, but he never does any such thing. Instead, he just keeps running his hands through it, letting it fall onto the ground, and then repeating the process.

Phil drifts off a bit, and when he opens his eyes again, Technoblade is still holding onto his hair, but he's also asleep and tucked into Phil's side. He's tugging at it a bit, and Phil leans his head to the side so it's not as bad.

Overall, it's the calm before the storm, and Phil cherishes each and every last minute, until he too falls asleep for the night, and wakes up to the next morning.

The morning is chaos.

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"Wilbur, please, I need my hand-" Phil nearly stumbles as Wilbur just lets his feet give out, Phil having to carry Wilbur's weight with the kid just deciding not to stand anymore. He's not strong enough to drag Phil to the ground, but it's a good attempt.

"No." Wilbur chimes, his head falling back as he looks up at Phil with a stupid little grin. He's practically just hanging off of Phil's wrist now, and Phil pulls Wilbur along, the kid's feet dragging across the floor as Phil walks through the room.

“Where’s my bag?” Phil asks, trying to look around with some difficulty since he’s dragging Wilbur around while doing it.

“I dunno.” Techno shrugs. He’s fiddling with Phil’s boots on the ground, and only now does Phil realize he’s messing with the shoelaces. “You probably lost it.”

“Techno, give me my shoes.”

“No.”

There’s a knock on the door before it’s swung open. “Hey, Phil, Bad wanted me to ask before you went-” Skeppy walks into the room, ducking and screaming when a boot comes flying his way. It falls into the hallway.

“Good morning.” Technoblade says, turning his back as if he wasn’t the one who threw the shoe.

“Skeppy, could you get that for me?” Phil asks, Wilbur beginning to hum a random tune loudly as he swings on Phil’s arm.

“Phil, you have a pebble in your shoe.” Technoblade says, frowning a bit as he holds the rock in between his fingers, squinting at it. “These shoes suck.”

“Shoes are just bad.” Wilbur sings, kicking his feet a bit as Phil tries to lower him down to the floor and get him to let go. “Bad shoes, bad shoes.”

“Okay, I know you both are acting like this because I’m leaving-”

Technoblade throws Phil's other boot towards the doorway as Skeppy walks in again. Skeppy once again screams and ducks.

"Bad, bad, shoes." Wilbur sings, practically laying on the floor now, still holding onto Phil's arm with a death grip, Phil hunched over and trying to pull away.

"-it'll only be for a short while, guys." Phil reassures, Wilbur paying him no mind and continuing to sing about the faultiness of shoes. "Wilbur-"

"Oh, oh, Techno, now!" Wilbur raises his head suddenly, and Phil nearly loses his balance with Technoblade suddenly slamming into his side, trying to climb onto him.

"Alright, you little *shits*-"

"Get him, get him!" Wilbur says, trying to pull Phil towards him as Technoblade tries his hardest to bring Phil down.

"Technoblade, I swear, don't you dare-" Phil tries to push Techno off, only for Techno to kick him in the back of the knee as he continues to try and climb Phil.

Wilbur laughs, high-pitched and happy. Skeppy stands awkwardly in the doorway with two shoes in his arms, just watching as Phil struggles to stand up with two kids grabbing at him. He ends up tumbling to the ground, swearing when Technoblade drapes himself across Phil's chest and refuses to budge.

Bad takes that moment to appear, walking down the hall to where Skeppy is just hovering at the doorway. "Hey, Skeppy, I was-" Bad starts, pausing at the fact Skeppy is just standing in place, holding shoes in his hands.

They both look up into the room with Technoblade shrieking as Phil starts to fight back, tickling Techno in the sides. Wilbur, upon seeing Technoblade fall to Phil's hands,

immediately does a 180 and tries to escape, only to get yanked back by the shirt, Phil taking him as a victim too.

“What are you guys doing?” Bad asks slowly, amusement evident in his voice as he watches Technoblade kick and squeal when Phil continues to tickle him.

“Dealing with these little shits.” Phil huffs, Wilbur trying to bite at Phil’s hand to get away. “Where’s my bag? Where’d you two put it?!”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Technoblade lies, eyes wide with a poorly hidden smile on his face. He squeaks when Phil just tickles him again, not believing his words. “I’m innocent, it was Wilbur’s idea!”

“Wha- No it wasn’t, no, no, *no*-!” Wilbur practically screams when Phil turns his attention towards him, tickling him as well. “Under the bed! It’s under the bed!” He shrieks, Phil laughing as Wilbur is able to slip through Phil’s arms, tumbling across the floor in his haste to get away.

“Weeaak.” Technoblade huffs out, whacking Phil’s hands away when Phil taps him on the nose.

“Thank you, Wilbur.” Phil says, getting to his feet, leaving the kids just laying on the floor. Techno kicks Wilbur in the leg, and Wilbur kicks back, the both of them falling into a small fight with legs swinging at each other.

Phil ignores their scuffle and goes to look under the bed, and sure enough, he finds the bag there, mostly untouched. He stands up straight, putting the bag over his shoulder as he turns to Bad and Skeppy.

“Good morning to you two.” Phil grins, walking up to them and not giving any of his attention to the fact Wilbur and Techno are currently trying to murder each other on the ground behind him. Skeppy gives Phil his shoes. “Great start to the day.”

“Your kids are fighting.” Skeppy deadpans, Bad looking slightly worried at the way Wilbur is trying to bite Techno, who pushes his hand against Wilbur’s face to keep him away.

Phil just grins.

---

They eventually go to eat breakfast, agreeing that Phil can leave after he’s eaten and talked a bit with Skeppy and Bad, just to sort things out.

Wilbur and Technoblade have taken it upon themselves to grill Phil on how to not get caught or hurt while he’s on his trip. It’s mostly Wilbur who’s lecturing him, though, and while it’s sweet the kid is trying to give tips, it’s also bittersweet on the idea that Wilbur knows this through first hand experience on his own.

“No towns.” Wilbur insists, stabbing at the food in his plate as if to stress his point. “No towns at all, if you are sleeping, you sleep in a forest.”

“Or in a tree.” Techno suggests.

“Or in a tree!” Wilbur nods. “But also be careful of forests, because there are also sometimes traps that get placed down on the dirt. They’re kinda easy to avoid, but you still need to be careful. Don’t let people see you. No friends, don’t talk with *anyone*.”

“Wasn’t planning to.” Phil drawls, Wilbur narrowing his eyes at Phil.

“Can you fly in the clouds?” Techno asks, and Phil nods. “Then fly in the clouds, so you don’t get seen.”

“Yeah, yeah! People might see you and follow you, so hide in the clouds or, or fly at night. And if you’re on the ground with people somewhere close to you, you need- a cape! Bad, he

needs a cape! To hide his wings.”

“Sure, I’ll go look for one.” Bad smiles, getting up from the table to do just that. Skeppy raises his eyebrows as Bad goes, and he turns his attention to Phil.

“How long do you think your trip will be?” Skeppy asks, leaning his elbows onto the table. “And I don’t mean that in a rushing way, we’ve had guests stay here for up to a year, at times, but I do want to know how long we’re going to have these two without any help.” He points a finger at Technoblade, who raises up his fork with a quiet smile. Skeppy makes a face that’s vaguely nervous.

“Hm, two weeks, I think.” Phil says, tilting his head to the side a bit as he thinks about it. He’ll be flying non-stop with short breaks, trying to travel as fast as he can, then going a bit slower on the way back. With no threat of hunters holding him back, Phil knows he can make good distance in a short time. He can fly fast, if need be. “Maybe longer. But I’ll try not to be gone for too long.”

“You should take another weapon, just in case.” Technoblade says, raising his head towards Phil.

“I have a sword and knife, mate.”

“Take another knife.” Wilbur suggests, and Phil rolls his eyes.

“Phil!” Bad calls, coming back into the kitchen with a dark grey cape folded in his arms. “So I found this, I’m not sure if it’ll fit, but it could work. And also, I had wanted to ask,” He gives the cape over to Phil’s outstretched hands, and Phil rests the fabric in his lap, Technoblade poking at it with a judgmental face. “Any tips for Wilbur and Techno, anything we should know about?”

“Oh, yes, please.” Skeppy nods, Phil pausing for a moment.

“Alright. Don’t let Wilbur eat stuff from outside, he tends to eat things off the ground when he’s feeling peckish. Make sure Technoblade has enough blankets for when he goes to sleep, he gets cold easily. Make sure Wilbur drinks enough water, he gets dehydrated easily. Let Techno practice with his sword, he does it as a stress relief thing, and it’s good for him to keep up with his lessons.” Phil rattles off, holding up his fingers as if he’s counting something. “If Techno isn’t practicing with his sword, I’d say let him read some books too, he hasn’t done that in a while, and I’m sure you have a few stories around. If you can, help Wilbur with reading as well? I’m not sure how far along he is...?” Phil looks to Wilbur.

“I can read, but not a lot.” Wilbur shrugs. “I can also write though!”

“I bet your handwriting is bad.” Technoblade mutters under his breath.

“It is *not*.”

“Help him with reading, if you can.” Phil smiles. “If they wake up in the middle of the night, reassure them kindly before sending them back to sleep, let them share a bed, I doubt they’ll want separate rooms. Techno enjoys soft material, Wilbur and Techno don’t like wearing shoes, so as long as they’re not running around outside, don’t make them. Keep them from planning any trouble, and don’t let them near the town or out of the forest until I get back.”

“...Noted!” Bad grins, while Skeppy just makes an incredulous face and seems to look off into the distance, mumbling quietly under his breath and trying to repeat what Phil’s said.

“Can I teach Wilbur how to sword fight while you’re gone?” Techno asks, Wilbur’s face lighting up.

“Yes! Please, Phil-” Wilbur tugs at Phil’s sleeve, nodding.

“As long as you’re careful with it, and Skeppy or Bad are watching.” Phil says, brushing back Techno’s hair from his face. “You know what not to do.” Techno nods, a determined gleam in his eyes.

“Don’t worry about the forest not being safe while you’re gone. We’ve been protecting this place for a long while, I’m sure we can handle anything that comes this way.” Bad says, Phil smiling appreciatively.

“That’s true, but then again, we might get a bit more company while hosting the literal bringers of the apocalypse.” Skeppy points out, Bad’s face shifting into something unsure. Wilbur snorts, Phil sighing quietly under his breath.

“Oh, we can handle it!” Bad nods, standing up straight with his hands on his hips. “I’ll make sure of it.”

“I’m going to need to practice a lot with my sword.” Technoblade says quietly, and Phil rests a hand on his shoulder, silently reassuring him. Skeppy and Bad don’t look like much at first glance really, but they’re very obviously not human. And with that, Phil has a feeling that they have a lot more sitting underneath their skin.

“Any other questions?” Phil asks. “Before I go.”

Wilbur grabs onto Phil’s arm with a death grip. “You can wait a little more.” He tells Phil, almost phrasing it like a question.

“It’s better if I go as soon as I can, mate.” Phil responds, and Technoblade leans into Phil’s side, his breakfast half-eaten in front of him and mostly forgotten. Phil wraps an arm around each of them and holds them close, putting his attention towards Skeppy and Bad.

They talk for a little while more, Phil giving details on not pushing the kids and to be careful with them, because while they are kids, they have been through a lot more than most. And Phil would hate for them to be stressed while he’s gone.

Bad talks a bit about any other times hunters have come into the forest, Skeppy mentioning a few monsters who have come and gone, kept safe in the protection they have around their home. From what Bad says, they’ve never had a hunter get so far as to actually come into the house, and any of those that were even able to make it to the front porch, Skeppy had punched them so hard that a tooth went flying.

Phil thinks that story would be amusing to Techno and Wil, but they both don't seem to be listening, and instead they're just leaning against Phil, hands holding onto his shirt. If Phil didn't know any better, he'd say they were asleep just like that, tilted a bit awkwardly in their chairs, heads resting against Phil's chest.

Eventually after about twenty minutes of reassurement and Phil making sure he's got everything, he has to stand up and go out the door.

Wilbur's already crying.

Techno looks near crying, and also looks like he's biting his tongue to try and not burst into tears.

"I'll be back before you know it." Phil says softly, kneeling down in the grass outside, the sky blue and bright over his head. He'll easily be able to fly up and away from the forest, then make his way to a town named 'Summercross', where Tommy is supposed to be. "I'll be as quick as I can, no detours."

"Be careful." Technoblade says, quiet and worried. "No fights, don't get into any fights, just run and get away, don't get hurt--"

"I'll be alright." Phil sooths, and Technoblade's face scrunches up, his eyes looking down as he tries to hold back tears. "I'll be as careful as I can, I can handle myself on my own."

"I know that, but--" Technoblade cuts off, his voice cracking in the middle as tears overflow. "I know." He mumbles, but he doesn't seem to be convinced of it.

"Be as fast as you can." Wilbur sobs, grabbing onto the front of Phil's shirt. "Don't- don't get distracted, and don't stay anywhere, you just come back, and- and you get back."

“I will.” Phil nods, pulling them both close and wrapping his arms around them.

“And watch out for any spies, or, or snitches-” Wilbur cries, voice wavering as he tries to keep talking. “Don’t talk to anyone, be careful, be-”

“I will be careful.” Phil promises. “I will be so careful, and I will make my way back, I promise.”

“You better!” Wilbur sniffs, Phil laughing a bit and wrapping his wings around them both, resting his chin onto Techno’s head.

“I’ll be alright.” Phil says quietly. “Even if I’m hurt, I won’t stay hurt. I’ll heal quickly, and I’ll get by.”

“I’d prefer if you don’t get hurt at all.” Technoblade mumbles, eyes closed.

They all stay there for a moment, Phil just holding them close and trying to keep that overwhelming feeling of love close to him. For a moment, everything is alright, calm and kind, and Phil is just holding his children close, no worries over their heads.

But eventually, the moment passes.

Phil pulls away, pressing a kiss to Wilbur’s and Techno’s heads, and trying his best to wipe away their tears with his hands. He whispers reassurance just one more time, promises to come back, promises to be careful.

“I love you both.” Phil tells them, quiet and honest, and he hates the sharp pain in his heart that comes when he has to pull his hands away from their faces. “More than anything in the world.”

“I love you too.” Technoblade says back, huffing as he wipes at his face, hands shaking. He reaches one hand down to grab onto Wilbur’s and Wilbur holds on tightly.

“I love you too.” Wilbur whispers, barely enough to even hear it, but Phil can see the way his mouth forms the words, and he hears it loud and clear in his head.

“You take care of each other.” Phil says, hugging them one more time, before standing up on his feet. “I’ll be back before you know it.”

They nod, eyes wide and tear-filled as Phil’s wings stretch out, and Phil glances over to Bad and Skeppy, who stand by the front door of the house, looking silently at Phil. Phil smiles, and Bad gives him a tiny nod.

Phil gives one more loving look at his kids in front of him, who step back with their hands holding on tightly to each other.

Phil flies.

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The next few days without Phil are a bit dull, to say the least. Surprisingly, there’s a lot less tears than expected, although both Wilbur and Techno prefer to stay locked up in their room, quietly sulking about their dad leaving.

Bad tries his best to be cheerful and give them something to do, bringing out books and puzzles and even a small box of crayons that had been covered with a layer of dust. For the first two days though, Wilbur and Techno don’t do much of anything, and stay in their room as if they’re mourning.

Skeppy and Bad would be worried, if it weren’t for the way that at moments they can hear the quiet laughter coming through the walls, Techno and Wilbur chatting to each other without end. While those two aren’t that fond of rambling to Skeppy and Bad, they seem fine with

each other, and they talk and talk into the night, until Bad pokes his head in and tells them both to try sleeping.

On the third day, Bad thinks that's when they start to go for the books he's placed in their room. There's the shuffling of things being moved around, and Bad sorta wants to ask them and see how they're doing, but he knows all he'll get is a vague answer and narrowed eyes in response. They're sweet kids, except when Bad or Skeppy is trying to have a conversation with them. Then they're simply just quiet, and maybe even a tad suspicious of the people who are watching over them.

Skeppy is able to convince Bad to just bring breakfast and dinner into the room for Wilbur and Techno, no need to force them to come sit in the kitchen when they're clearly only comfortable being alone with each other. At first, Bad isn't fond of the idea, with the fact that there might be spills, but after the kids agree to not eat on the bed and to be careful, he agrees.

On the fourth day, Wilbur comes out of the room, but only for a moment, and only to cause a bit of trouble.

Him and Techno had been reading a book together, a story of a prince learning to be a king, while also trying to master magic, with his trusty partner at his side. Wilbur thinks the story is fun, with how many life-and-death situations the main characters get into, all the shenanigans and plot twists. Technoblade purely just enjoys reading the story to Wilbur.

They both had been talking about the story and the last chapter, when Technoblade had off-handedly said something along the lines of wanting the cape that the prince had in the story. A long, flowy cape, bright red and made of the finest silk.

Wilbur tells Techno to wait, and promptly marches out of the room, Technoblade hovering at the doorway while trying to quietly call Wilbur back. Wilbur insists on Technoblade waiting, and he then breaks into a run, leaving Technoblade to just stand awkwardly in the middle of the hall.

Skeppy is sitting at the kitchen table, drinking something out of his cup, when Wilbur comes up, and asks *very nicely* for Skeppy to give him a red cape, fit for a king.

Skeppy blinks, and finds himself suddenly sewing red fabric in his hands, sitting on the floor with materials thrown around. Technoblade is sitting in front of him, a bored face, and Wilbur claps his hands together, seeming excited. They're all just sitting in the middle of the kitchen, and Skeppy is honestly not sure how he got here.

"I didn't know you could sew." Technoblade says casually.

"...neither did I?" Skeppy responds, and can't help himself from finishing up the thing he's putting together, quickly snipping at a piece of thread. "This is weird, oh boy."

"Oh." Wilbur blinks. "Did Phil not-?" He makes a small noise in the back of his throat, questioning, and Technoblade snorts, slapping his hands over his mouth.

"No, no, don't tell him." Technoblade says, and Skeppy can't pull his eyes away from what he's doing, but he can demand to know what they're doing.

"What? What did you do?! And why did it result in me *sewing*."

"Your hidden skills of craftsmanship must've awoken." Technoblade says, slightly sarcastic, and Wilbur bursts into laughter.

The moment Skeppy is done, Wilbur grabs the cape from his hands and yells out a quick 'thank you!' before running with Technoblade back to their room.

Bad finds him there five minutes later. He's less confused and more supportive of Skeppy's new hobby, if anything. Skeppy just accepts the fact he somehow got wrangled in to make something for those goddamn children.

Technoblade wears his new red cape and Wilbur cheers him on, the two of them running around through the hallways, and then surprisingly, outside of the house. Bad watches from

the front porch as the two of them pick up sticks from the ground and begin to whack them at each other, laughing and trying to beat the other.

At that moment, it seems like the kids might be just alright while Phil is gone, and Bad rushes to get Skeppy to come look, the kids running barefoot in the grass, seeming focused on trying to win. Techno is going easy on Wilbur, but Wilbur doesn't know that, he's just swinging a stick with all he's got.

"You suck." Wilbur grins, Technoblade scoffing for a moment before whacking Wilbur across the head. Bad yells something about being careful, and Wilbur responds by trying to murder Techno with a stick.

Technoblade retreats at that point, laughing as Wilbur yells more than a few curse words, Bad covering his ears and seeming displeased. Skeppy finds it hilarious, laughing his heart out at the way Wilbur screams 'fucker' at the top of his lungs while running full speed after Techno, who keeps going in circles.

Wilbur pauses in his running to catch his breath, Techno doing the same while laughing in an almost mocking manner. It makes Wilbur want to tackle him into the grass.

However, he doesn't get the chance, because Technoblade looks up with a grin, then his eyes go wide, and he slams into Wilbur, tackling him instead, the two of them rolling across the ground as an arrow flies past.

Wilbur looks up with panic as Technoblade grabs him by the arm, the two of them finding three hunters with weapons raised, standing in the trees not too far off.

"Okay, kids, get inside!" Skeppy yells, running and standing in front of them, arms raised out. Another arrow gets shot, but it barely makes a mark on Skeppy, and instead just bounces off, his skin resistant.

Bad walks past Skeppy to quickly take care of the threat, but they're both a bit surprised there's a bit more than expected.

There's an awful lot of hunters in the trees, and Skeppy blinks, realizing that they must be surrounded or something.

Bad turns around to Skeppy.

"Well, this is going to take a while." Is all Bad says, an almost sheepish smile on his face, and he then turns back around and grabs an arrow out of the air, running at the nearest hunter. Skeppy goes to drag the kids into the house.

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Phil flies with as little breaks as possible, and he flies as fast as he can, going through the clouds and only glancing down at the ground every now and then to make sure he knows where he's going. Bad had given a map in the satchel he packed, and Phil uses it to make his way across forests and towns, dry lands and rushing rivers.

Occasionally, he flies low enough for someone to spot him, and very rarely, they'll yell and recognize him for his wings, for the way he flies. Phil ignores them easily and continues on his way, not sparing another glance back.

He doesn't really sleep, if anything he just rests in short periods to let his wings have a break and to eat something, drink water, then keep going. The necklace around his neck wards off exhaustion, and Phil stays traveling.

It's a bit like he's in a trance, nothing else on his mind other than to get where he needs to be, and then get back home. The air against his face becomes familiar, and Phil arrives at the town in just a couple of days.

The mountain is high up, surrounded with scattered trees, and there's a trail that's supposed to lead up to the town. Phil doesn't need to use it though, and rather just goes to land right into the town itself.

When Phil lands, he does it quietly, folding his wings behind him and adjusting the strap over his shoulder. He lands right at the front of the town, standing still for a moment.

A few people see him right off the bat, a couple yells being thrown out, and Phil walks forward with a small smile, and a bit of amusement at the way the people trip over their feet in either fear or respect.

Inside the village, a small child sleeps in his crib, tail flicking as he dreams. His blond curls hide the tiny little horns on top of his head, and the black scales scattered across his skin shine a bit in the light.

Word spreads lightning fast, and the people in the town know for a fact that Phil is here for that child.

## Chapter End Notes

Dragoninnit go brrr

# A good bonding moment

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The town practically becomes deserted in a matter of minutes.

Phil's almost impressed with how quickly all the people disappear, the doors and windows being shut and their curtains being closed. The streets go silent, Phil's footsteps being the only sound he can hear, along with the faint sound of voices nearby, and the wind blowing over his head.

Phil scans the streets and buildings, looks at the shops and homes and porches that have all gone barren within moments. When he was flying near, he had seen plenty of people bustling about, carrying out their daily tasks of life. Now, it's as if Phil had imagined it. It's as if all the townsfolk have gone into hiding or have run away, in preparation for something big coming.

They probably expected his company.

Walking more into the town, Phil holds onto the strap of the bag over his shoulder, and he stretches out his wings a bit, knowing there are eyes on him. He can practically feel them following him down the road, curious and scared and oddly respectful all at once.

He stops, giving a small sigh, and he turns his head to a window, watching as the curtains shift, someone quickly trying to get away from his view.

Tilting his head a bit to the side, Phil smiles, then walks towards that building, up to that same window so he can knock his knuckles against it and call out for whoever is on the other side.

“Hello?” Phil calls, glancing at the door just two steps away. “I think you know what I’m here for.”

There’s the sound of a crash behind the door, but it doesn’t open, and Phil steps back, looking back towards the street. Should he search around? It seems like no one is willing to speak with him, and Phil doesn’t think it’d go well if he simply just broke into homes. It’s tempting, though.

There’s the quiet click of a lock turning, and Phil turns his attention back to the door in front of him, just as it cracks open just enough to show a fraction of someone’s face.

They’re terrified, eyes wide and their expression hesitant, but there’s something determined in those eyes that makes Phil wonder. Only for a moment though, before his mind reminds him he’s here for something more, not friends.

“Angel of Death?” They say, hushed and careful, and Phil-

He doesn’t freeze. Not quite. But rather, he hesitates, holds his breath, and then gives a jerky nod. That title isn’t something he’d thought he would be hearing. It’s come out of nowhere, and now Phil feels a bit more wary, from just that.

“Phil.” He corrects, voice stern in a way that nearly shows a threat. “You can call me Phil.”

“Phil. Sorry.” They repeat, and Phil just shakes his head.

“It’s-” okay? Not quite. Phil isn’t okay with that. He’s accepted the fact that the title is stuck to his skin, but he doesn’t think he will ever be okay with it being used. “Never mind it. Do you think you could help me out?”

“There were supposed to be people who would be leading you to him.” The person says, almost in a whisper. They don’t elaborate on who ‘him’ is. “I don’t know where they’ve gone, though...they might’ve gotten cold feet.” The person opens the door just a bit more to

look outside into the street, and Phil can finally take note of their appearance. Short, curly black hair with dark tanned skin, and a faint scar on their upper cheek.

They click their tongue in apparent disappointment, then look back to Phil in an expression that's purely just sorry.

"Could you lead me, then?" Phil asks, offering a small smile, and he watches as their eyes fall to behind Phil, to his wings that have gained meaning over the past few days.

"Of course." They agree, but they don't seem exactly happy about it. Their voice wavers as if Phil is going to lunge forward and attack at any moment, and Phil wonders what exactly this person is thinking of him, being so wary.

Phil steps back to let them walk out from their doorway, and they close the door behind them with an almost scared look, glancing up at Phil with a polite nod, then walking out towards the street. "Follow me, please?"

"You don't have to be so jumpy." Phil says slowly, the person nearly faltering in their steps as they look back at Phil. "I'm not looking to hurt anyone today."

"Today." They repeat, and Phil huffs. "And- yes, thank you, it's just- there's been talk about you, y'know?"

They lead Phil down the street, which is just as barren as everything else, every single person having gone inside, and Phil ignores the eyes he can feel on his back, on his wings.

"There's been talk and rumors being sent our way about you and your children, along with the apocalypse. We've been able to hide the fact the last kid is here, this town is practically sworn to secrecy. We didn't want to know what would happen if you were to blame the child's death on us."

Protection out of fear for the consequences. Phil has hardly done much, and yet already his reputation has protected one of his children from harm. A tiny part of him is glad with that, and a tiny part of him is somehow glad for the title he's been given, for the fear that he holds.

“And- and it's said that you're dangerous beyond words. Deadlier than anything else that is in the world. I'm looking at you- and I don't mean offence- I'm a bit underwhelmed.”

Phil snorts. “I'm really not that dangerous, mate. Rumors tend to twist the truth a bit. I'm just trying to pick up my kid so I can go home. I've got family waiting.”

“Family?”

“My other two sons.” Phil says. “Techno and Wilbur.”

“I-I know of them.”

“What's been going around about them?”

“Well.” They hesitate, seeming to consider before speaking again. “There's stories going around that their power is already growing too strong. Some are saying that they're still weak. Others think that you're holding their power back until the time is right.”

“And what do *you* think?” Phil asks. “About me and what I'm doing?”

“I think that maybe this good deed in helping you will have you spare our town in anything that happens in the future.” They respond, quick and matter-of-fact.

Phil blinks, then bursts out laughing. He can't help it, even with the wariness from the person who's leading him, he just finds it funny that people think he's going to come back around with his children purely to destroy the world.

What would be the point of that?

The world has hurt him plenty, but Phil has no care for petty revenge. He's got bigger things he'd rather worry about, and it's on the much simpler aspects of life.

A door swings open from across the road, and a woman comes running out, leaving the door open behind her. Phil can see people standing by the doorway, watching as the woman runs right towards Phil and the stranger.

"SAM!" The woman yells, practically tackling the person in a rush, and Phil has to step back so he won't get knocked into. "You crazy fool, how are you even- oh goodness, hello." The lady looks towards Phil with wide eyes, holding onto Sam's hands tightly as she backs them both away from Phil.

Phil gives a small wave. "Hi there." He looks towards the building she's came from, and the people hovering by the doorway all seem to freeze with his gaze.

"This is Phil." Sam quickly blurts out, raising a hand out towards him, and the woman blinks. "There wasn't anyone giving him directions, so he ended up at my door."

"I had thought the others went, but apparently they ditched last minute- okay, okay, ah." The woman pauses, holding her hand out to Phil. "I'm Mary! Hello. Again. I'm so sorry for the confusion, there was meant to be someone to lead you over here, but things got miscalculated."

"That's alright." Phil cuts her off, Mary closing her mouth with a click. She pulls her hand back quickly after Phil doesn't shake it. "Where is he?"

"Oh! The- the child, right. You- please follow me, don't mind the company. I apologize." She quickly pulls Sam along by the hand towards the house she came from, and Phil follows with a quiet hum.

Phil ignores the people scattering around in the house as he walks in, and he rests a hand on the knife at his hip, keeping his eyes pointed in front of him.

“Sam, go over into the kitchen, I think Elliot was trying to cook something, he burnt it the moment word got here, though-”

“Okay.” Sam responds, and they walk away, Mary gesturing to Phil to follow through the halls. The house is cozy, quaint, and there’s a few people walking around, keeping their distance but very obviously curious as they peek in from around the corners.

“In here.” She says, stepping up to a closed door, and she opens it for Phil, then steps back to let him walk in first.

Phil stops in his steps for a moment, holding his breath as his eyes immediately focus on the small crib that’s placed up against the wall, across from the door. The room is a bit small, a colorful rug placed over the hardwood floor, a basket of toys placed in the corner. It seems like a child’s room, through and through, and Phil can’t look away from the crib.

“He’s been here for a while, this house has taken him in for the time being. Caused a bit of trouble, it’s a little hard for us to take care of such a child, but we’ve done our best while hoping you’d come along before the hunters did...” Phil ignores the words, he tunes it out a bit as he walks slowly into the room, his steps carefully quiet as if he’s trying to sneak past.

He makes his way up to the side of the crib, looking inside and finding little bright eyes staring right back at him.

Tommy, Phil thinks. That’s what the boys chose, and he thinks the name fits to such a face. Phil stares at the kid for a bit longer than needed, his hands resting lightly on the fence of the crib, and he takes note of the black scales scattered across the kid’s hands, the sides of his face. There’s a little tail behind him, and Phil feels a smile creep onto his face as he watches it flick back and forth.

“Hello, little one.” Phil says softly, reaching a hand into the crib so he can push away blond hair from Tommy’s face. The baby’s face scrunches up in something confused, and tiny hands grab at Phil’s fingers. He can feel little claws just barely scratch against his skin, and Phil only feels fond.

“I’ll...leave you two be.” Mary says quietly, closing the door and retreating into the hallway. Phil hardly pays her any mind, only glancing back to make sure the door is shut before reaching into the crib to pick Tommy up.

“Come ‘ere.” Phil murmurs, the kid fussing as he’s picked up out of his crib, and his little feet kick as his tail whacks weakly against Phil’s hand. “Hi, Tommy.” Phil whispers, holding Tommy close to his chest, cradling in his arms. “Hello.”

Tommy’s face is still scrunched up in something unhappy, clearly not at all amused with this stranger suddenly holding him so close. Phil chuckles a bit at that grumpy face, and he rocks back and forth to try and sooth him.

Phil shushes him quietly as Tommy starts to nearly cry, not at all knowing Phil and not wanting to be held by him. Phil just hums, smiling a bit as Tommy gives an upset expression up at him. Phil gathers up the joy in his chest, the feeling of happy satisfaction humming through him, and he lets out a small chirp, aimed right at Tommy.

Tommy’s crying stops nearly instantly, instead replaced with a confused frown, and Phil laughs, then does it again. Tommy seems more curious at that, and tiny hands grab at Phil’s shirt as the kid gives incoherent babbles towards Phil, as if he’s asking for it once more.

Phil grins, dropping a quick kiss onto Tommy’s nose, and he chirps again, for Tommy and Tommy only.

## Chapter End Notes

IM GONNA HAVE PHIL MAKE BIRD NOISES

WHY?? i dunno, self-indulgence

but also YEAHHHH BIRD PHIL CRADLING DRAGON TOMMY

thanks for readin

# Twins

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Not again!” Wilbur screams, dropping to the ground as an arrow flies over his head. He hits the dirt with his arms shielded over him, and when he turns back around to the trees, there’s a swear just at the tip of his tongue. The only reason he doesn’t scream it out is because Bad is beside him in a split second.

Technoblade practically lunges forward towards where the arrow came from with an angry little yell, ready to fight whoever dared to shoot at Wilbur, and he’s immediately grabbed by the back of his collar and yanked up and away by Bad.

“Both of you inside-!” Bad sternly says, Techno being set on the ground with the grumpiest expression in the world. Skeppy is behind them within moments, grabbing them both by the hands to lead them inside towards safety as Bad takes on yet another swarm of hunters.

Somehow, they’ve fallen into a nice little routine, with this. The first days seem to have been the calm before the storm, because now, the hunters just *won’t* stop coming.

It’s as if they’re always waiting for the worst possible times to attack, and personally, Wilbur is absolutely done with it. They didn’t even get ten feet out into the front yard today, Wilbur just wanted to eat some grass, now there’s arrows getting thrown at him.

It’s really rather rude. How is he supposed to learn sword fighting from Techno with this? Maybe when Phil gets back, the attacks will stop. Or maybe they could just go somewhere new. Honestly, Wilbur doesn’t like this forest all that much. There’s no rivers nearby, and he misses the feeling of his feet in the water.

“Can I fight just *one* ?” Techno asks as they go inside, Skeppy pulling them through the front door with wary glances behind him. “I can handle one!”

“No!” Skeppy responds, Techno groaning with a frown. “Listen, kid, good for you that you know you can handle yourself, however Bad would *kill* me if I just let you run outside in the middle of this-”

“Fuck off!” Wilbur yells through the door, watching as Bad kicks down someone with a crossbow, the hunter slamming into the dirt and not getting back up. “Get them, Bad!”

“Language!” Bad scolds, but he does then go on to fling someone into a tree, so Wilbur is happy with that. “Skeppy, close the door!” Skeppy hurries to do just that, shutting it and locking it with a click. He stands in front of it, as if shielding anything from coming in.

“Okay,” Skeppy sighs, running a hand down his face. “-both of you, to your room.”

“But we barely even went outside.” Wilbur mutters, walking over to the kitchen instead, huffing as he stomps a little with his steps. Techno follows at his heels, just as unhappy. “Techno didn’t even get to grab his sword!”

“I should’ve taken it outside with me.” Technoblade says, as Wilbur goes over to the counter to reach up at the pot of food still sitting there from yesterday’s dinner.

“Yeah, maybe then you could’ve stabbed someone. Maybe that’ll make them go away.”

Techno snorts.

“No murder talk in the kitchen.” Skeppy says hesitantly, pulling the pot away from Wilbur’s hands. “Sometimes you both kinda scare me.” He mutters underneath his breath.

“That’s a good thing.” Techno shrugs. Skeppy just frowns down at him.

“Go to your room.”

“But we didn’t even-” Wilbur goes to protest again, and there’s a crash of glass nearby. Techno grabs onto Wilbur’s arm as they both whip their heads around, Skeppy rushing forward to see what it was.

“Ah, shit.” Skeppy swears. “They threw a rock through the front window! We just fixed that!”

“Language.” Techno says quietly, Wilbur snickering.

“Okay, today’s attack is a bit more hectic, I’m going to stay by the front door, you two go into your room, you know the rules-” Skeppy says hurriedly, shooing away the two children down the hall. “Don’t go sneaking out, don’t go giving Bad an heart attack, go read your books-”

“But we didn’t *do* anything-” Wilbur whines.

“But what if we get attacked-” Techno insists, purposely walking slowly. “What if someone gets inside the house-?”

“Yeah, what if a hunter comes inside-” Wilbur jumps on, nodding his head.

“Okay, you know what!?” Skeppy makes them wait by the doorway, quickly walking down the hall. Wilbur watches him go with a curious look. He looks to Technoblade for a moment, who raises his eyebrows in silent communication. Wilbur gives a small grin in response, and they both seem to agree to each other telepathically that once this attack is over, Skeppy is definitely going to be sewing them something again.

There’s a quiet frantic fear that’s tucked underneath Wilbur’s heart, with the attacks and the constant hunters. But it’s nothing that he isn’t used to, and it’s easy to push away and deal with when Techno is at his side, holding his hand. It’s easier now to focus on simple things, and it’s easier now to just make little jokes, have the tension be just a bit lighter.

Wilbur's back at square one with being a target, and with people trying to catch him, kill him, hurt him, but this time around he has Techno. This time around, he has Bad and Skeppy. This time, there's protection, and this time, Wilbur doesn't even need to run. He's protected long before any harm comes to him.

The hunters outside are an annoyance at best, and never did Wilbur think he'd be able to just regard them as that. As only an annoyance, rather than a threat. It's a good change, if anything, it's a rather amusing one, and Wilbur smiles even with the shattered window at their front door.

"Here!" Skeppy yells, coming back down the hall, and shoving a small knife into Wilbur's hands. It's sheathed away, small and simple, but when Wilbur pulls back the covering to look at it, he can't help but blink at the actual blade that's sitting in his hands. "Bad is probably going to kill me later for that, but have that- ONLY for emergencies. Now go read your books, and don't play with the knife, Wil-"

"I'm not!" Wilbur yells, quickly covering the knife again and holding it to his chest.

"Do I get a knife-?" Techno asks, leaning into Wilbur's side as he observes the weapon in his hands.

"You can share!" Skeppy yells out, and the door closes shut, the two kids safe inside their room as Skeppy runs back to the front door to keep an eye out for any stray hunters that Bad couldn't keep away.

Techno stares at the door for a moment before giving a small unimpressed scoff. "I need my sword." He says, and promptly goes to search in the room for where he's left it.

"I got a knife!" Wilbur grins, uncovering it to see it fully. "I could've just used my claws, though. Or my voice. I don't think I need this."

"No, you should keep it." Techno says, finding his sword on the ground beside the bed, attaching it to his belt. "At least until I can teach you something with a sword."

“Can’t you teach me here?”

“I’m going to hit something if I try in here, there’s not enough space.” Techno refuses.

“Although maybe, I might start considering it if those hunters keep perisistin’.” He says a bit quieter, sighing. “I want Phil back.” He says loudly.

“He’ll be back.” Wilbur reassures, putting the knife back into its sheath, placing it onto the bed as Techno climbs onto the mattress, flopping down with another big sigh.

“But I want him back *now* .”

“...yeah, me too.” Wilbur agrees, laying down beside Techno. “Bad and Skeppy are alright, though, I mean, did you see the way Bad launched that guy-?”

“He went *flying* .” Technoblade says, holding his arms up out towards the ceiling.

Wilbur laughs, bubbly and amused. Techno gives a wide grin at the sound of it. “That was cool.”

“I’m going to be able to do that one day.”

“Launch someone into a tree?”

“Yup.” Techno nods. “I won’t even need my sword, I’ll just- kick them, and boom, I win. Fight is over.”

“Just like that.” Wilbur hums. “I bet you’ll be able to fight like, a hundred hunters at once.”

“I’ll be able to protect you.” Techno says, honest and pure with every word. “I’m going to protect Phil, I’m going to protect Tommy.”

Wilbur’s heart fills with emotion at Techno’s words, and he rolls over on his side to face Techno with a big smile. “We can *both* protect Phil and Tommy.”

“You can’t even sword fight.”

“I- Well, no, but I have my voice!” Wilbur insists, jabbing a hand into Techno’s side. Techno’s face scrunches up as he squirms away from Wilbur’s hand, whacking back in retaliation. “I can practice, just watch. You won’t even have to fight, I’ll just make the hunters *walk* away.”

“But then they’ll just come back.” Techno frowns. “Unless you can make them forget?” He turns his head to Wil. “Can you do that?”

“I don’t know...?” Wilbur blinks. “I’ve never thought of doing that.”

“Eh, some other day.” Techno shrugs. “I can do the protecting for now.”

“No! I want to help!” Wilbur protests, reaching behind him and grabbing at the knife he’s been given. “I can still *do* something. Look, I’ve got a knife and everything.”

Techno snorts. “Gimme that.”

Wilbur pulls it out of his reach. “No, it’s my knife.”

“Skeppy said we could share.”

“You have your sword!”

“But I want to *see* it!” Techno grapples for the knife in Wilbur’s hands, and Wil holds it just out of reach, kicking with his feet to keep Techno away. He laughs as Techno grabs at his face to try and get closer to the knife. “Give it over!”

“No!”

Wilbur tries to sit up from the bed, and Techno grabs him around the neck, reaching for the hand that’s keeping the knife just out of reach. Wilbur twists away and squeals as he tries to keep it upraised, and Techno keeps leaning onto his back to try and grab it, the two of them being too close to the edge of the bed-

They both fall onto the ground with a yell and a thump, the knife falling with a clatter onto the ground. Technoblade glares at it as if it’s the bane of his existence, and Wilbur just groans as he tries to push Techno off of him.

Wil rolls over onto his back, looking up at the ceiling with a short huff as Techno just lays his face against the floor, his hand reaching out to Wilbur to poke at his fins. He seems to have given up on the knife entirely, quickly moving on to just get Wilbur’s attention, and Wilbur lets out a big puff of air, his face turning into one of thought.

“What do you think Tommy is going to look like?” Wilbur asks, out of the blue. It’s a question that’s been rattling around in his head for a while, and Techno gives a long hum. “Phil said he’d be small...”

“I think he’s going to look like Phil.” Techno says. Wilbur blinks, before giving a small laugh.

“Why?”

“I dunno.” Techno shrugs, his fingertips poking into Wilbur’s cheek, at the scales scatter across his skin. “I’d just like for him to look like Phil.”

“That would be nice.” Wilbur nods. “Do you think he’ll have powers or something? Like my voice?”

“Maybe.” Techno considers it for a moment. “I mean, he’s also supposed to ‘destroy the world’ or whatever. Maybe he’s really strong.”

“He’s a baby. He isn’t strong.”

“But maybe he will be.”

“He’s a child.”

“Phil said you’re a child.”

“Yeah, well, you’re a child too.”

“Yup.” Techno smiles, happy with the way Wilbur fizzles out with an unimpressed face. “But I’m older than you, so I’m better.”

“No you’re not.” Wilbur argues. “You’re not older!”

“Yeah?” Techno raises an eyebrow. “You’re smaller than me.”

“But that doesn’t mean you’re *older*.” Wilbur makes a little face. “How old are you?”

Technoblade hesitates, narrowing his eyes. “...nine.”

“I’m ten.” Wilbur responds nearly instantly.

“No you’re not!” Techno pushes at Wilbur’s arm. “You just asked me to make sure you would say a bigger number!”

“I’m older than you!” Wilbur laughs, his giggling quickly turning into little screams of terror as Techno grabs at his arms. “I’m older! I am!”

“No you’re not!”

Wilbur laughs, even as Techno repeatedly smacks him in the shoulder.

## Chapter End Notes

Wilbur and Techno: having a brother moment

Skeppy at the front door: beating up a random hunter

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sorry for the short chap >:P

thank you for reading, school has started back up and MAN is it getting hard to write...

# Reunions

## Chapter Notes

this chapter is dedicated to eneli :P

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Phil really does wonder how exactly such a young face could ever grow up to be an apocalypse bringer.

Tommy's just so- small. Too small, too tiny for Phil to handle, and his eyes seem to stare right into Phil's very soul, curious and watching and trying to figure out who he is. Phil knows Tommy doesn't know him, but he will.

The chirps in Phil's throat die down, and he chooses to instead just hum quietly, pressing his face into Tommy's hair, holding him close. He paces slowly around the room, wings shifting behind him as he feels a swell of protectiveness curl up in his chest. How can anyone want to hurt a child like this? He's hardly dangerous at all, if anything, his claws are the most dangerous thing about him, and even then, Phil doesn't think the kid knows how to scratch anyone on purpose.

This child is a monster, through and through, those scales and ears can't suggest anything otherwise. Many would see such features and turn away, spooked by the potential of it becoming something horrid, scared of what it one day might be.

Phil just thinks it's the most *adorable* thing.

Tommy won't stop looking at Phil, he keeps staring at him with those bright blue eyes, and Phil can't bear to turn away, so he just stares back. The smile on his face feels like it's stuck there, and he would be lying if he said his vision didn't become just a little bit blurry upon the realization that he finally has the last child in his arms.

This is it. No more running, no more searching, no more of the horrible, sickly fear that he could be too late. He's found the last one, and he can finally take him home.

Finally, Phil can take his children home.

Tommy makes an unhappy noise, hitting a fist at Phil's collarbone, wanting for the chirps to come back. He glares up at Phil with far too much anger for a baby, and Phil laughs a little, standing still.

"Hello, Tommy." He says, wanting to repeat that name over and over again. A name chosen with love, chosen by two boys who had been so excited for someone else to be a part of this family. Phil thinks of how they might react to Tommy when he does return, and the thought makes his heart swoop a bit, because he knows for a fact that one of them is going to cry. "Tommy."

Tommy blinks with a scrunched up face, not knowing that name yet. Not knowing that he's been given a proper name by someone who will love him so *much*.

Phil's curious as to what he's been called this entire time. What have his caretakers been saying to him? What have they been telling him? He prays that they've been kind, because he doesn't have the time to enact revenge if they've been cruel.

Tommy gives a stream of babbled words, as if he's responding to Phil, and Phil just nods and listens and loves. He's only held this child for so little time, but Phil adores him, and he swears he can see the universe in those bright eyes.

He will never allow for anything to harm this child. He refuses to let the fear of others tear this life apart. Phil will give anything to make sure Tommy grows up safe, and he will give over his entire being, his entire life, just to ensure that all three of his children will grow up without needing to be afraid.

Children should not be afraid. Even if the world promises them an unkind fate, then Phil himself will tear apart that so-called destiny with his two bare hands. They deserve so much better.

Tommy gives an upset whine, squirming in Phil's arms with his tail swinging around behind him. Phil tries to rock him back and forth, soothing words being whispered Tommy's way, and Tommy's having none of it. He shakes his head and leans away from Phil, slamming his hands onto Phil's shirt. He doesn't care much for a stranger he hardly knows.

Phil's a little hurt at Tommy disliking him so clearly, but he understands that this takes time. He can't exactly communicate to Tommy that he's been looking for him for a while, but he can show effort through caring for him throughout the next few days, months, years.

"Here, here." Phil walks over to the corner of the room, a basket of toys placed to the side. The toys inside are old, worn-down and a bit dirty, and Phil notes that there's hardly any toys in here at all. He picks out a few wooden blocks, kneeling down on the ground, and placing Tommy down gently. "Want this?" Phil asks, holding out the block.

Tommy eyes it with a suspicious look, but he does take it, holding it close and turning over in his hands curiously. He looks up as Phil places a few more blocks in front of him, and he reaches out for them, placing them closer in front of him. He bites down on the corner of one, and Phil laughs, pulling Tommy's arm away from his mouth.

"Don't do that, mate. I don't know where that's been." Phil grins, and Tommy yanks his arm away, glaring up at Phil and sticking the block back into his mouth. "Nooo..." Phil snickers, plucking the block out of Tommy's hand, effectively preventing him from trying to eat it once more.

Tommy cries out with an upset face, arms reached towards his stolen block, and Phil gives a responding warble from the back of his throat. Tommy's tears seem to disappear nearly instantly, eyes wide up at Phil.

"Haven't done that in a long while." Phil says quietly, a small tug on his heart. Tommy just stares, on and on, until he makes a little noise as if he's asking for Phil to do it again. "Haven't had anyone to listen to me, I guess."

“Bah.”

“Yes, yes.” Phil laughs, holding the block out to Tommy again, but Tommy doesn’t even reach for it. “Now I do. Maybe I’ll make a habit of it again, with the way you seem so fascinated by it.”

Tommy makes a babbled noise and he waves his hands up wildly, his tail whacking against the floor behind him. He reaches for another block on the ground in front of him, holding it to his chest, but this time he doesn’t put it in his mouth, instead he just holds it tightly in his hands. He continues to talk, not with anything understandable, but Phil feels like he could listen to it for hours.

He chirps, just once, and Tommy goes quiet, tilting his head up at him with all his attention on Phil. Phil holds back a laugh, staying silent after that single noise, and Tommy huffs, throwing his block onto the ground. He moves onto his hands and knees, crawling over to Phil with a certain determination set in his movements.

The moment he’s beside Phil’s knee, he sits up and presses his hands against Phil’s thigh, staring up at him with a tiny scream.

“Hi there.” Phil places the block in his hand to the side, and he reaches out to push Tommy’s hair back, moving it out of his face. Tommy makes an expression that’s absolutely offended and appalled that Phil’s done such a thing, but he also doesn’t move away, and stays staring up at Phil as if he’s waiting for him to do it again.

“You are such an angry little child.” Phil says, brushing Tommy’s hair back once more. “Too much anger for such a tiny face.” Tommy presses his head up into Phil’s palm with a pout.

A wave of affection washes over Phil entirely, and he picks up Tommy by the armpits, ignoring the little squeak of surprise he gets from it, Tommy kicking his legs. He lays down on his back, wings splayed out behind him, Tommy resting against his chest.

Tommy stays absolutely still for a few passing moments, then lifts his gaze up to Phil, who stares back down at him, arms held loosely around Tommy's tiny body. Tommy holds a hand out to Phil's face, fingertips tapping at his nose, his cheek. Phil gives a tiny warble, and Tommy squeals with joy, holding his hands towards Phil's face.

How could anyone ever want to hurt such a precious life?

Phil does it again, again and again, and Tommy seems so much more inclined to be in Phil's arms now, ecstatic to hear noises that Phil hasn't made in years. Tommy laughs, something pure and sweet, and Phil grins and chuckles with him, a swell of emotion rising up in his throat and threatening to spill happy tears once more.

This is the first time Phil's seeing Tommy smile, and he would do anything in the world to keep that smile on Tommy's face.

They both rest there for a while, Phil talking quietly to Tommy, giving small chirps here and there, which always make Tommy's face light up in a way that makes Phil's heart squeeze.

Phil leans his head back onto the ground, staring up towards the ceiling. He sighs, satisfied and happy and extremely relieved. He's tempted to just fall asleep here. Tommy's already done so. He snores quietly against Phil's chest, tail flicking behind him every now and then, and Phil wants nothing more than to just keep that sight forever.

But he has family to return to. And he doesn't know if this place is really safe. Sure, they've kept Tommy alive and watched over, but the story may be different with Phil. Tommy's young. Defenseless and innocent. Phil is something else entirely, and he knows the rumors that stick to his name these days.

Everything feels so perfect right now, everything in its right place, but Phil cannot stay, and he cannot dare wait. Every moment he waits, that's a moment where something could go south.

"We've got to go home." Phil murmurs out, and Tommy may not hear him, but the words are for him anyways. "Wilbur and Techno are going to love you."

Tommy sleeps on, peaceful and happy, and Phil sighs again, forcing himself to sit up, carrying Tommy against his chest. It's not entirely over yet. Phil has to get back, and he's got precious cargo this time around.

Standing up on his feet, Phil adjusts the sleeping baby in his arms, letting Tommy rest against his shoulder as he slowly makes his way to the door. Opening it quietly, Phil steps out into the hallway with a slight hesitancy clinging onto his back.

The people here had seemed wary, almost terrified, and that works in Phil's favor. If needed, Phil can and will use that fear to get out of here. He can't afford to lose Tommy, or to lose time, so if such resorts have to be taken, then Phil will do so.

There's the faint sound of a conversation down the hall, and Phil walks towards it with slow, quiet steps. Tommy makes a tiny sound in his sleep, and Phil feels like wrapping his wings around Tommy to shield him from any strangers that come close. He feels too open, he feels terribly vulnerable, and he reminds himself of the sword on his hip.

Walking out into an open room, Phil's stood in front of an empty wooden table, with a doorway to the kitchen just beside him. He stays out of sight, and he can hear a hushed, panicked conversation from here.

"-no, no, you can't say a thing. You don't know how he is, I don't know how he is, for all we know, he's going to kill us the moment we tell him-!"

"Would you rather he find out on his own?! He'll be pissed!"

"Which is why we don't *say* anything. Get him out, let him take the kid, that is what we've been planning for the past few months, haven't we-?!"

"Well, I don't know, I feel like the Angel of *Death* should be warned that people are coming up the mountain for his *head*-"

Phil freezes, his eyes going wide as he takes in a sharp breath. His heart drops right into his stomach, and cold, painful fear digs into his spine as he realizes that there are hunters on their way, with Phil being their set target, of course.

There are hunters coming, and he has *Tommy*, who's too young to run, too young to fight, to defend himself-

Stepping in front of the doorway, Phil practically stomps as he stands at the entrance of the kitchen, and the two people in there turn to him with wide eyes, surprise and horror painted onto their expressions.

"Shit!" One of them yells, hiding behind the other as they both take a few stumbling steps back. "Wait, we can explain-!"

Phil holds a finger over his mouth, and their mouth clicks shut, silence filling the room. Phil spares a glance towards Tommy, and he's relieved to find that he's still sound asleep against his shoulder.

Turning his gaze back onto the people before him, Phil narrows his eyes into a withering glare, gritting his teeth with a near scowl. "You set me up." Phil grits out, and he gets two frantic heads shaking no. "You *sold me out* -?"

"We didn't, we didn't-!"

"Hunters are on their way at this very moment, when I had thought you had good intentions in mind-" Phil hisses out, walking forward with a burning anger and fear wrapped up in his chest. "-were you just trying to make me put my guard down?"

"It wasn't us!" They hold a hand out, Phil snarling. "It wasn't, I swear on my life! This whole village is sworn to secrecy, we all agreed to let you take the child!"

“Did you really?” Phil speaks low, anger just barely hidden underneath his words. “Or were you using him as bait?”

“No, no! When you got here, there were supposed to be people to lead you to him, but they weren’t there, right? We sent out Mary to go looking for them, to see why they ditched- they’re the ones who ran for the hunters! They sold you out, the rest of the village is innocent!”

Phil tilts his head, and they go quiet, moving away from Phil once more, careful and slow as if Phil might lunge at them at any moment, like some rabid animal. They seem truthful, if only because Phil knows they desperately want to clear their name. And they did seem honest when he first arrived here.

Leaning his head down towards Tommy, Phil can feel panic and fear crawl up his throat, and he tries to stop his hands from shaking. “*Shit*.” He whispers out, and he tries his best to take a deep breath in, turning his gaze back onto the people in front of him.

“I swear I’m telling the truth.” One of them says, and Phil only frowns with a cold glare. “I swear.”

“I believe you.” Phil says quietly, and he watches them sigh in relief. “But this just means it’s going to be harder than I thought to get away.”

“We- We don’t know how close the hunters are. You could fly.”

“Or I could get shot out of the sky.” Phil responds bluntly, turning away and resting his palm against Tommy’s back. “Fuck.”

Phil can’t risk that. He can’t risk *this*. Tommy is so small and so young in his arms, and he can so easily be hurt by cruel people that are blind with their fear. Phil will protect him, but he promised his sons he wouldn’t fight, and he can’t just hide. He needs to get *home*.

Just a little more running, he tells himself. Just a little more. He's so damn close, he can't just lose it all now.

Turning back to the people behind him, Phil levels them with a deadly look, eyes a little too bright.

"You kept my son alive and safe, and I am thankful for that. But if you want this village to stay standing in the future, then we both need to get out, *now*. Without hunters on my tail."

"You want us to sneak you out?"

"Would you rather I fight my way out?"

"We don't want anyone getting hurt." One of them steps forward, holding their hands out. "We can try sneaking you out through the back, and leading you off the mountain in an unused trail... but if we get caught--"

"If you get caught, they'll be angry, but *you'll* be fine. We'll be killed." Phil spits out, watching them flinch away with his tone. "We can't waste time. Lead the way."

There's a beat of hesitation, and Phil rubs his hand at Tommy's back, hoping that his rest won't have to be interrupted anytime soon.

"Okay." Phil lifts his head to Sam walking past him. "Follow me, quickly. Elliot, go try and buy time. Make them talk, say he left, anything."

"Be careful." Elliot responds, nodding. "I wish the best for you and your son."

Phil looks towards the ground, wings shifting behind him. "Thank you." He says quietly, and then follows right after the person leading him along.

They make their way through the house and out the backdoor, staying at a fast and steady pace as they follow a stone path leading behind the houses. Phil walks while making his steps as quiet as he can, and he holds Tommy tight and silently pleads to the universe to let him get away without losing anything today.

He swore he would get back to Wilbur and Techno. He will be damned if anyone doesn't let him do so.

"We'll need to move quietly, try not to let anyone see you or that kid. Now that hunters are in the town, people might not agree on trying to protect you anymore..."

"They weren't protecting me, they were protecting Tommy." Phil corrects, and Sam turns their head back towards Phil, the two of them stopping for a moment behind a stone wall.

"That's his name?"

"It's what my sons chose."

They hum, giving a small smile. "It suits him, I think." They glance out, looking around and seeing nothing. "Okay, come on."

They continue quickly to make their way past the streets, the town still eerily quiet and empty, the same as it was since Phil's arrival. It seems like no one is willing to go outside until the coast is clear and Phil is gone.

There's the faint sound of raised voices far down the street, and they turn the corner, breaking out into a sprint, running along the side of a building to head behind it, towards the edge of the mountain. There's a faint dirt path that leads off somewhere, and Phil is led down it, the two of them making their way down a steep trail.

It seems this path leads to the side of the mountain, but the pathway sometimes just leads onto a small, steep drop, and Phil keeps his balance by flapping out his wings and landing lightly on his feet. Sam goes a bit slower than him, keeping an eye behind them until they reach what looks like a dead end, a cliff leading off to nowhere.

Tommy's woken up on Phil's shoulder, and he begins to cry, Phil cooing at him to try and calm him down. "This is where the trail ends?" Phil asks, rubbing at Tommy's back as he looks towards Sam.

"Not exactly? It kinda just leads straight down. No one likes climbing it, though, so." They shrug. "It should be fine for you, flying and all. Just- Stay low, glide by the trees if you can-"

An arrow whizzes past them both, and Sam screams, Phil stumbling back with a sharp fear stabbing him through the heart. He turns with a snarl towards the attacker, and finds a hunter higher up on the path, holding an empty crossbow.

"THEY'RE OVER HERE!"

"Shit, shit-!" Sam panics, Tommy crying loud in Phil's arms, and Phil feels a strong murderous rage simmer in his veins. If he had the chance, he would attack right back. "Phil, Phil, go!" They scream, running towards the hunter. "Stop! Put the crossbow down, don't shoot, don't shoot-!"

Phil doesn't need to be told twice. He runs, jumping off the ledge of the cliff and spreading his wings out wide, holding Tommy tightly as gravity pulls him down. He can hear the sound of fighting and yelling behind him as he begins to fly.

"HE HAS A *CHILD*, DON'T SHOOT-!"

Another arrow whizzes past, and it's thankfully a bad shot, not even near Phil. Either way though, it makes him panic and yell, and Tommy continues to sob in his arms. Adrenaline coursing through him, Phil picks up speed and flies as fast as he can, trying to make distance, trying to get away.

He flies like the arrows are still being shot, and he keeps going and going until he's sure he's out of view, too far from the mountain to be followed. Tommy's cries have quieted down, but he still makes broken little noises against Phil's shoulder, and Phil lands down in the forest underneath him.

It's less of a landing and more of a crash, but Phil mostly lands on his feet, so it's fine.

"It's alright, it's- it's okay." Phil says to Tommy, kneeling down on the ground and letting Tommy sit on his lap. "It's fine, we're fine, we're okay-" Phil chokes out, and his heart is slamming against his ribcage, his breaths are coming out quick and short, and he can't stop *shaking* .

Tommy looks up at Phil with teary eyes, but he's not crying loudly like before. Rather, he just stares, holding onto Phil's shirt with a small yell to try and catch Phil's attention.

"You're okay, little one, we- we're-" Phil's voice wavers, and he sobs, holding Tommy to his chest, resting his chin onto the top of Tommy's head. Tommy cries out in alarm, knowing Phil's distressed, and being distressed in turn. "Shhh. It's okay..." Phil whispers, squeezing his eyes shut and trying to stop the tears that blur his vision. "We're okay..."

He rocks Tommy back and forth, breathing in slowly and letting it out. His hands keep trembling from where they're resting on Tommy's back, but the panic does eventually pass, leaving only a relieved exhaustion behind. Tommy cries into his shirt, and Phil murmurs reassurance over and over. He can't really tell if he's saying it to himself or Tommy, but either way, the mood calms down.

Phil lets out a quiet warble from his throat, and Tommy gives a noise like he's trying to copy it. It's nowhere near what Phil did, but it's a heartwarming attempt, and Phil smiles, and hugs Tommy close.

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Phil travels with an added caution, now.

He only flies during the night, underneath the cover of the dark, and he's careful upon coming across towns. The food he has isn't exactly enough for the both of them, but Phil can easily handle an empty stomach for a single night here and there. Tommy's too young to go hungry.

Sleep doesn't come often for Phil, and while Tommy seems to be constantly taking naps, Phil hardly rests at all, only laying down for when Tommy needs to use him as a bed. His necklace glows bright red with each passing day, and Phil knows that he absolutely cannot get in any sort of fight now. This trip to return is one where he *has* to stay under the radar, and he can't be seen, he can't be spotted, lest he wants hunters trailing after his heels.

Phil sneaks around and stays hidden, and breaks into a few homes here and there. Taking care of a baby isn't easy when he's on the go, he needs supplies, so he takes what he can and leaves without a trace. Maybe the owners of the house will be upset, but they'll live. Phil's just trying to get home.

Even with the stress and added risks of having to move through the land without being seen, there's still the little moments.

Tommy is an incredibly curious child.

Phil wonders if the town ever took him outside and showed him the beauty of the world, because the kid seems to stare at almost anything. He squeals whenever Phil shows him something particularly interesting, such as a chirping cricket, or a tiny leaf that's half eaten by a caterpillar.

"Don't put that in your mouth, mate." Phil says, for what feels like the hundredth time at this point, because Tommy keeps trying to eat leaves and dirt. Phil is glad he can go without sleep for a long while, because he's pretty sure that if he closed his eyes and rested, Tommy would wander off to go eat a stick.

“Ahhh.” Tommy responds, reaching for the leaf that Phil’s plucked out of his hand. He makes a sad noise when Phil doesn’t give it back.

“Stop eatin’ the leaves, you little monster.” Phil huffs, and Tommy gives a tiny scream, then shoves his face into Phil’s shoulder, trying to eat his shirt.

That somehow gives so much more joy to Phil than it should.

Tommy adores the animals more than anything. The forest is full of them, and it’s not hard for Phil to catch a frog off the ground and show it to Tommy, letting him ‘hold’ it by having Tommy hold his hands around Phil’s. More than once, Tommy tries to lick the frogs. At one point, Phil finds Tommy with a lizard in his mouth.

The lizard was alright, if anything just a little spooked, but Tommy had been devastated that he could not in fact eat his lizard snack. Phil had to sooth him for a solid half-hour after that particular disappointment.

Tommy usually sleeps whenever Phil’s flying for the nights, but when he is awake, he stares up at the stars with wide eyes. He screams and squeals when Phil does any fun turns during flight, and Phil cherishes each and every little giggle and laugh.

Phil talks to him, as much as he can, and Tommy does begin to recognize his name with time and with use.

They’re sitting beside a river one early morning, Phil catching a few fish to eat while Tommy plays with a couple rocks at the riverside. Phil finds himself drifting away from his current task in hand, and instead just becomes lost in watching Tommy *live*, the kid reaching his hand out towards the water, pulling back when he finds it’s cold. He throws a rock in there, and then seems sad that the rock is gone.

He looks up to Phil and cries out for help, and Phil snickers.

“You threw it in there, mate, what did you think was going to happen?” He asks, and Tommy gives a frown, resting his weight on his hands as he leans forward to stare towards the water. “Tommy.” Phil calls, and Tommy looks up, crying out again.

Phil grins with a fond warmth surrounding his heart, and he does go ahead to take the rock out of the rushing water just to give it back to Tommy. Tommy doesn’t mind that it’s wet, and he holds it close with a satisfied smile.

The rock ends up finding a place in Phil’s satchel, because Tommy refuses to go without it, and becomes near tears when Phil can’t give it back to him when he wants it. It’s definitely not what Phil thought Tommy would be having as a new toy, but he’s willing to carry a rock if it occupies Tommy for a bit while he does certain things.

They both travel slowly, Phil flying during the night, and then the two of them hiding amongst trees during the day. Tommy warms up to Phil more and more with each passing day, and Phil gives all his attention to him, gives all his love.

It takes a solid week and a half for Phil to get back to his sons.

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A knock sounds out through the room, and Technoblade and Wilbur hardly even acknowledge it. Wilbur gives a small glance behind him to the door, but Techno just keeps reading the book in his hands, and Wil returns his attention to Techno’s voice.

“Boys!” Bad calls, another small knock.

“We’re busy!” Wilbur calls, leaning more into Techno’s side, trying to follow with the words on paper as Techno says them outloud. Wilbur knows that if he really tried, he could probably read this book on his own, but he loves listening to Techno read to him, and he knows Techno loves reading to him.

The door opens anyway, and Wilbur huffs, stubbornly keeping his attention on the book.

“Hey, you two.” Skeppy calls, and Wilbur has no doubt that Skeppy is the one who opened the door.

“No, we didn’t try sneaking out, we’ve been reading.” Technoblade says nearly automatically, and then resumes reading. “-the dragon is alive! They yelled, shocked and surprised...”

“Get your nose out of the book for a second, would you?” Skeppy laughs, and Techno frowns with an upset sigh.

“I didn’t do anything!” Wilbur sings, nudging Techno to keep reading anyway. “Keep going, keep going, we’re on the good part.”

“Ohhh, but we’ve got something for you!” Bad offers, and Technoblade turns his head to the door as Wilbur reads ahead on his own to see the rest of the scene.

“Is it food? I’m kinda hungry.” Technoblade admits, and Skeppy snorts, leaning into Bad’s side as Bad wraps an arm around his shoulder.

“Technoblade, look, look, the dragon burns them.” Wilbur says, Techno turning his head back to the book.

“Don’t spoil it.” Techno frowns, but he does quickly read silently to catch up with Wilbur. “Oh, it did. Nice.”

“Cool.” Wilbur grins. “Do you-”

“Boys.” Phil says, and both of them freeze.

Wilbur's already running on his feet before he's fully turned his head towards the doorway, and Technoblade lets the book in his hands drop onto the floor as he scrambles to follow.

Wil gives a small scream, Phil taking one step into the room and then having Wilbur slam right into him, wrapping his arms around his hip. Techno doesn't quite throw himself into Phil like Wilbur does, but it's pretty darn close.

Phil struggles to push them off long enough so he can kneel down, and he holds one arm out to hug them both, keeping Tommy held with one arm. Wilbur wraps his arms around Phil's neck, crying and trying to hold on as tight as he can, and Technoblade leans into Wilbur, standing on his toes so he can press his forehead against Phil's.

Curling his wings forward, Phil holds them both underneath his feathers, and Tommy makes a little noise that almost sounds confused. Wilbur's sobbing, and Technoblade is desperately trying to not cry, and also failing.

"I missed you too." Phil says, his voice a bit shakier than he hoped for. "I missed you both so much. Were you okay while I was gone?"

Wilbur gives a sob as an answer. Technoblade is able to actually speak. "We- There's been hunters attacking the house, but-" He sniffs, wiping at his face. "Skeppy and Bad-"

"Sh, sh. It's okay. Yeah, they told me about it. You're both very brave, you know?." Phil whispers, and Techno cries, holding onto Phil's hair with a loose grip. "Look. Shhh, look. I have someone you're going to want to meet."

Wilbur only seems to bury his face even more into Phil's neck. "I don't want to meet him, I want you to hug me."

"Why is he small?" Techno asks, sniffing.

“He’s a baby, mate.” Phil smiles, wrapping his arm around Wilbur’s middle and pressing a kiss to the side of his head. “Here, Wil, look. Don’t you want to meet your new little brother?”

“Mhmn.” Wilbur gives as a response, but after Technoblade pokes him in the back, he does pull away to look towards Tommy. “Hi, Tommy.” He murmurs out quietly, and Techno holds a hand out towards Tommy. “...He’s tiny.”

Phil laughs. “Babies usually are.”

Tommy holds onto one of Techno’s fingers, blinking up at them with a strange expression on his face, like he knows him, somehow. Technoblade smiles softly as Wilbur leans into Phil with a hum, and everything is alright.

## Chapter End Notes

\*slams open your door\* IS IT TIME FOR DOMESTIC HOMELIFE????!!

lmao gosh I love family dynamics. Anyways! Thank u for reading, apologies for slow updates, unfortunately I am just so cool and swag that I just write whatever the heck my funky little heart desires so I take time to get back to certain fics lol

till the next chap!!!

## Quiet travels

Techno wakes up to the sound of Tommy crying, which has become a rather familiar noise over the past few weeks.

At this point, Techno wishes he would stop crying entirely, but he supposes that Tommy is cute enough to be forgiven. Besides, Phil told him babies cry as a way to call for help, because Tommy can't talk yet. Techno disagrees. Tommy can talk. He just doesn't do it well. Once they get to the safe place, Techno's going to teach him how to talk properly.

Blinking his eyes open to a dim morning, Techno finds the sun to be not quite up yet, the light dull against the walls of the cave they're sleeping in. His brother is warm next to him, so Techno holds him tighter, shifting his head up to get Wil's hair out of his face. He instead rests his chin on Wil's hairline, glancing beside him to see if anyone is going to calm the crying child anytime soon.

Sure enough, within just a few moments, Phil's up as well, and Techno can hear his voice speaking softly, trying to calm Tommy down from whatever made him upset in the first place. Techno stares off into stone as he listens to Phil talk, and feels his chest swell with something fond, grateful. He feels happy. He closes his eyes again, content in his brother's arms with Phil's voice echoing through the cave.

"What's wrong, mate, hm?" Phil whispers, Tommy whining with another small sob. "Sh, sh. What's happened? You're alright. You're okay."

There's a soft *shhk* of feathers dragging across the floor, and Techno tries to imagine Phil sitting up, Tommy held carefully against his chest. He tries to imagine the cave entirely, the forest outside, Skeppy and Bad keeping watch among the trees. He blinks his eyes open when sleep tries to take him back under. He doesn't want to go back to sleep yet, even with how calm the mood is. He wants to stay awake in this moment.

"Shh." Phil says to Tommy as he gives another upset whine. "You'll wake up your brothers."

Wilbur shifts from where he's resting beside Techno, and it seems like he hadn't been asleep after all. He glances up to Techno, and Techno looks down at him, the two of them sharing a quick look. They settle back to where they were, and continue pretending as if they're asleep.

A quiet chirp sounds through the cave, and Techno's ear flicks as he focuses in on the noise. Phil's been doing that often, usually around Tommy. Both Wil and Techno think it's rather strange. Techno always assumed that just because Phil *looked* like a bird, that didn't mean he would sound like one too. Wilbur seemed less surprised over it than Techno, though.

"He's a bird dad." Wil had said, and Phil had burst out laughing at that. Technoblade wasn't impressed. Phil's not a bird. He's Phil. Those are two different things.

Tommy's crying settles down entirely, and the cave lapses back into comfortable silence. Wil peeks up over Techno's shoulder in curiosity, and Techno tries to tilt his head to look back as well. It's been a few weeks with Tommy's company now, but they'll never give up a chance to interact with him.

He's so tiny. Technoblade could hold his tiny hands for hours.

Phil seems to sense eyes on him, because he turns his head away from the baby in his arms and instead looks at them, and both Wilbur and Techno immediately slam back down against the floor, pretending to be asleep.

"I saw you." Phil calls, and Wil quietly giggles into Techno's shoulder. "How long have you both been awake?"

Techno responds right away, not seeing any reason in pretending to be asleep now that he's been caught. "I just woke up." He answers, turning away from Wilbur to rest on his back. Wil makes an annoyed noise at Techno pulling away. "Wil was up before me."

"The crying baby woke me up." Wil says simply, grabbing at Techno's shirt to keep him as a pillow. Even with how he says that, there's no true irritation behind his words. "Is he okay?"

He adds a moment later, only proving his concern.

“He’s alright.” Phil hums, rocking Tommy in his arms and getting a small curious noise in response. Tommy reaches his hand up at Phil, and Phil pokes a finger into his tiny palm, letting him latch on. “Probably just a bad dream.”

“I hate bad dreams.” Wilbur sighs. “They’re shit.” Techno snorts.

“Did you two sleep well?” Phil asks, his wings shifting from behind him as he looks around for his bag, his sword. Technoblade reaches out for his own weapon, and he finds it beside him, exactly where he placed it last night. It’s cold to the touch, and Techno frowns, pulling his hand away and leaning into Wilbur.

“Yea.” Wil responds, and Techno gives a vague hummed agreement that he did the same. “Do we have to keep walking today?”

“Do you want to get home in the next week, or in the next month?” Phil asks back, and Wilbur gives a grumpy noise. “We’re nearly there, don’t worry mate.”

“That’s what you said last week.”

“Yes, but then we got sidetracked by those hunters, remember? They threw us off track. That’s why we’re taking longer.”

“Uhg.”

Phil just smiles, shaking his head as he pulls his hand away from Tommy’s grip, gathering his things before standing to his feet. Tommy fusses a bit with the sudden movement, but then he settles, tail swishing around behind him as he tries to look over Phil’s shoulder for anything interesting.

“If you’re both up then, we should start going and eat on the way.” Phil says, walking up to them and leaning down over their heads.

“No.” Techno mutters, squeezing his eyes shut. “I’m asleep.”

“Me too.” Wilbur agrees, but he’s smiling too much to be anywhere near convincing.

Phil gives an amused scoff. “Come on. The day’s started.” He nudges one of them with his foot, and gets a hand batting him away in return. Techno makes a displeased groan.

“Few more minutes.” Wilbur bargains. “The sun is barely even up.”

“That’s a good thing.” Phil hums. “We could go watch the sunrise.”

“I don’t want to see the sunrise.” Wilbur huffs. “I want to lay here with Techno.” Technoblade produces a noise of agreement.

Phil rolls his eyes, but he relents, standing up straight and looking towards the entrance of the cave they’re in. The forest is quiet and calm as he walks towards it, and he does note that it’s a bit earlier than when they usually wake up. He wouldn’t complain about extra time to start off the day, but he also wouldn’t want Techno and Wil to be grumpy for the next hour.

He’ll give them just a few minutes. If they’ve fallen back to sleep by the time he checks on them again, then he’ll let them rest some more. If they’re still up, then he’ll drag them out to start walking, and hopefully go eat some food.

He’s got to be patient with them. They’ve been doing a wonderful job with all the traveling they’ve been doing lately, and there’s been little complaint about how often they’ve needed to stop and hide. Traveling with three kids is difficult enough when hunters are trying to stay on their tail, it gets even more complicated when one of those kids is a baby, who doesn’t really understand the weight of needing to stay hidden.

At least Skeppy and Bad have been helpful. They offered to help escort them to wherever Phil was aiming to go, and Phil took the offer gratefully, appreciating any sort of help he could get. Their house in the forest had been practically surrounded by hunters when they first set off, and Phil was a little sorry over the amount of broken windows they had gotten from protecting Techno and Wil.

Bad had assured him that it was fine. Skeppy just said it was to be expected, especially since they were housing literal apocalypse starters. Phil still apologized either way, and if he had more time, he would've offered to help repair some of the damages.

However, time was a quick, short thing, and Phil didn't have any to spare. Dawdling anywhere wasn't worth it, now that he had all his children underneath his wings, and the only thing he wanted to do was get somewhere safe. So they left, just a single day after Phil arrived, all of them rushing through the trees to get away from the sheer amount of hunters that had taken camp in the forest. It was difficult to even make it out without any injuries, but thankfully, they managed. Not without some more blood on their hands, but either way, they managed.

Once they were out, it was just a matter of getting far away and making sure no one had their trail. That took a little while, although that is time well spent. It is better to be safe than sorry, and Phil will gladly travel around in circles for a whole week to lose hunters rather than let them find where he's planning to live.

At the top of a hill in the middle of nowhere, there's an old, small house that Phil built with his own hands a long while ago. It's hidden away perfectly, mountains around it with a river nearby and a town far off, only a few days travel by foot. The surrounding forest there is dense, dangerous to anyone who tries to travel into it, and that's precisely why Phil chose to live there in the first place.

The clearing with his home is safe to stay in, but getting through the forest is another story, simply because of the terrain and the way the land is tilted. Add a few traps in between those trees, a watchful eye from the sky, and the place is perfect.

It's somewhere he can call home.

He left it behind over a decade ago, so he doesn't expect it to be in the best shape, but it should be somewhere to start. This time around, he's got a good reason to live there, and he's got a good reason to stay.

This time, he won't be alone.

Tommy babbles out into the morning air as Phil brings himself out of his thoughts, and he smiles down at the child in his arms, readjusting his hold on him.

"It's a nice morning, huh, mate?" Phil asks, tilting his head up towards the sky, watching the sun slowly rise. It's been getting warmer these past few days. Phil knows Techno loves the heat, loves basking in the sunlight when he can, but he's not so sure about Wilbur. From what he's seen so far, he doesn't think Wil enjoys the heat all that much. He's much more fond of the cold, the freezing type of temperature he might get from a rushing river.

With time, they'll get that sort of cold. But right now, he thinks summer is starting to approach, and he mentally prepares himself for the complaints of melting alive in the sun.

Tommy stares up with Phil, an intense focus in those bright eyes of his as he looks upon the sky. Phil grins wide at the sight, then plants a loving kiss right at the side of his young face. Tommy scrunches up his nose with a frown, but he doesn't cry, and instead resorts to staring at Phil, with the same sort of intensity.

"Hello." Phil greets, and Tommy puffs up his cheeks, his tail swinging back and forth against Phil's arm. "Let's go see if Wil and Techno are up yet, hm?"

Tommy gives a noise that could be agreement, could not, and Phil turns and walks back anyways, heart full with love. He ends up finding Techno and Wilbur fast asleep, and decides to give them a few extra minutes of rest.

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They continue to travel with Phil's instructions.

He's the only one who actually knows where he's heading, so he's the one who has to read the map and point out where they have to go next. His wings itch to take flight, but he can't risk the chance of being seen, so he stays on the ground, where it's safe. It's slow-going, walking through here, but it's safe.

They travel in something like a line, Bad staying at the back to make sure no hunters will sneak up behind them and stay on their tail. Skeppy insists on being at the front, and while Phil had been hesitant about that at first, Wilbur had then assured him that Skeppy is "stab-proof" so there's no worries of him being hurt by a stray arrow or something. Phil relented after that, at least.

There's a few towns they pass by here and there, but they don't bother to try staying there for a night. Phil knows by now that's an awful idea, and even if the entire town swore to stay quiet, he knows that it wouldn't take long for hunters to come barging in with weapons raised. They do use the towns for supplies, however, Skeppy usually goes in on his own, since with a simple hood he can pass well enough for some normal person.

Bad is tall, a little intimidating at first glance, so he would draw far too much attention. Phil's just naturally well known at this point, his wings and face have been spread around the lands through word of mouth and through warnings written on paper. He couldn't go undercover in any town even if he tried. The kids are completely out of the question. Besides, they don't want to go into town anyway. They'd much rather stay at Phil's side, stay out of sight.

Skeppy's good at grabbing bargains, and he tends to come back with plenty of food to last them until the next town they'll pass. They eat and they keep moving and they rest with nothing but the night sky over their heads and the warmth of each other close by. Skeppy and Bad keep insisting on keeping watch, no matter how much Phil insists he could too.

"You watch over your kids." Skeppy had argued, jabbing a finger into Phil's chest. "And we'll watch over you. You have enough on your plate already."

"I can deal with a bit of lost sleep, mate." Phil deadpans, Skeppy flapping a hand, unconvinced. "Don't you both need rest, too?"

“Oh, I don’t sleep!” Bad shakes his head, Phil blinking. “It’s not a thing I do. Skeppy can, although he doesn’t need it.” He leans down, resting his chin on top of Skeppy’s head with a smile.

“You look like *you* need it, though.” Skeppy grins.

“Hey!” Phil huffs, and before he can say anything back, that’s when Tommy begins to cry once more, and Wilbur’s calling him over to stop the tears.

Although they’re all technically on the run, at the risk of being hunted down and killed, Phil finds a strange calmness in the travel, in the company he has while walking through the wilderness.

Technoblade and Wilbur often chat to each other in hushed whispers, smiles wide and laughing to each other. They talk with Bad and Skeppy, ask for stories from Phil, make up stories on the way. They play games and act out dramatic fights that Phil will never really understand, because there’s apparently dragons and knights and evil wizards, and Techno is a king, but he’s also a criminal, and Wilbur is his knight, but he’s also a prince, and it’s all so childishly endearing. They sing and they talk and ramble on, and they look back at Phil with such love that it makes him want to pull them close and never let go.

Tommy is entertained with all the new sights he’s given, all the attention that comes his way, and he stares and stares at anything that moves. He babbles and he grabs and he swings his tail with furrowed eyebrows and there is so much life in those eyes, Phil would give so much to keep it there, keep it bright. He’s so curious about Techno and Wil, and sometimes it feels like he really does know who they are, really understands what they say, because he reaches out to them with such a look on his face that Phil can’t understand.

“He’s familiar.” Technoblade had admitted to Phil one night, while Wilbur was asleep and Tommy was snoring away with him. “It’s like with Wil, he’s- There’s something there. I feel like I know him. Like I’m supposed to know him.”

Phil had wondered if that was the prophecy at play, magic or not, but Techno didn’t seem all that concerned about figuring it out. “Guess that means they’re my family.” Techno simply

accepted that, and Phil had kissed him on the head and held him close, satisfied with that conclusion as well. “I wish I felt like that with you too, though.”

“You’re still my son either way.” Phil assured, holding Techno safely in his arms with the night silence wrapped around them.

“I know. But still.” Techno wanted more, and Phil will admit, maybe he does too. If there’s one good thing to come out of those damned prophecies, then maybe it could have been that they were all connected, always meant to be.

Phil’s always held a certain type of bitterness towards destiny and fate and all of that bullshit, because of what it’s taken and what it’s led him to. But if that same sort of destiny brought him his sons, then he will, for just a moment, be grateful.

They keep under the radar as they keep moving, slow and careful, and it’s tedious, nearly annoying, but it’s worth it, because no one knows where they are, and it *shows* .

“There are *so* many flyers out there with your face.” Skeppy had told him one day, after returning with food and new supplies. The kids had huddled together to the side to chow down on their food, and they chatter amongst themselves, completely unaware of what the adults were discussing over their own meal.

“What?” Phil raises an eyebrow, Skeppy digging through his pockets to bring out a crumpled up paper, trying to smooth it out in his hands. “Well, I mean, they are looking for us-”

“No, no, but this was like- Honestly kinda worrying, I’m worried about the people making these, but here.” He holds out the flyer, Phil taking it from his hand. “I saw at least fifty of those plastered all around the town. As if more flyers are going to make it easier to find you.” He snorts.

Phil huffs at the depiction of himself on the flyer, some sort of creature with sickly looking wings, wide eyes, sharp, horrid claws. He seems like such a monster in this image, something terrible and deadly. It’s not far off, to be fair. Although he’s taken care to not let himself go to that extent, he can surely strike plenty of fear into anyone if he were to push it just a little

farther than what he's used to. The description below the drawing is short and to the point, avian with black wings, wanted dead or alive for harboring monsters of the apocalypse.

The number underneath that is impressive. Phil makes a noise of interest at the amount. "That's a shit ton of money." He's worth a pretty penny, by the looks of it. And all he's done to earn it is be a dad. What a world.

"Almost makes me want to turn you in." Skeppy grins, and Bad whacks him on the arm. "I'm joking!" Phil laughs.

"They're really starting to get desperate about this now, though, aren't they?" Bad notes, holding his hand out for the paper. Phil gives it over, turning his attention towards his food. "They really think you're trying to- what, end the world?"

"Well, you see, I'm secretly raising the children of the apocalypse so that way I can destroy the entire world as the Angel of Death." Phil says. "According to everyone."

Skeppy poorly holds back a laugh.

"Will you be alright where you plan on going?" Bad asks, slight concern twisted into his tone. "Are you sure no one is going to find you there?"

"I've lived there before." Phil shrugs with one shoulder. "Granted, no one was actively looking for me at the time, but I was still never found. It's a good spot."

Bad frowns, holding the flyer against his chin with a thoughtful look. Skeppy chews on his food with a stare towards his partner, and he glances at Phil, then at the kids sitting nearby.

"Alright." Skeppy sighs, Bad looking at him with interest. "Guess we're finding a new place to live, then."

“What?” Phil asks, mouth half full.

“Well, it’s going to take so long for us to get all the way back to home, and you know, that place is half broken already, so I think maybe a new house is in order.” Skeppy hums, taking a bite of his food. “Although, not too close to you. It’d still be better if you and your kids are completely out of sight-”

“Wait-” Phil catches on, holding up a hand.

“Oh, and we’ve lived there for so long, too. A change would be nice.” Bad nods, seeming pleased. “We could be neighbors! Although we’d be far-”

“You guys don’t have to do that.” Phil protests. “Believe me, we’ll be safe, I’ll keep them safe. You can go back to your own home.”

“Who keeps you safe, then?” Bad asks, and Phil makes a face. “Anything could go wrong! You never know.”

“Look, we’ve been taking in guests and watching over random people for the past many, many years.” Skeppy says, raising his eyebrows. “You’re not winning this one.”

“You just don’t know the type of danger you could be put into trying to protect us.” Phil tries to say, and Skeppy makes an unconcerned noise, waving a hand. “I mean, the hunters-”

“The hunters were the most action we’ve gotten in a long while. Here I thought I was getting rusty at throwing a punch. Apparently not!” Skeppy grins.

“It’s fine, really.” Bad reassures. “We’ll just check in every now and then, see how you guys are doing.” He looks towards Wilbur and Techno trying to get Tommy to eat from their spoon, and he smiles. “I’d like to watch them grow up. They deserve better.”

“They deserve everything.” Phil agrees.

# Monstrous wings

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

They travel for another week, staying behind the cover of forest trees and sneaking their way around any nearby towns.

It takes a while for them to get somewhere with any real reward, and Phil doesn't blame his kids when they start to get a little impatient.

Wilbur ends up refusing to walk at one point, sitting in place and saying that his feet hurt. Techno sits down beside him, joining him in his little strike, with the complain that his hand hurts, so they just *have* to stop walking for the day and take a rest.

(His hand was perfectly fine. He had gotten a small scratch from sparring with Phil a day prior, but apparently that injury was grievous enough that he could not possibly take another step. He pretended to not hear Phil's point of his hand not affecting his walking ability.)

"We're getting close, I promise." Phil tells them, standing beside them with Tommy sleeping quietly in his arms. The kid had been sleeping a lot these past few days, and Phil thinks that might be because of the travel too. This entire ordeal might be tiring them all out, to be honest.

"You've said that like seven times." Wilbur huffs, leaning heavily into Techno's shoulder, Techno not taking his weight and instead letting the two of them just fall onto the dirt floor. They lay there with poorly held back giggles.

"And I mean it." Phil grins, hearing Skeppy snort from behind him as Wil gives a mocking noise. "Really."

“We’re going to be walking forever.” Technoblade declares, and Wilbur hums in agreement, seeming resigned to their new fate of being forced to march around in the wilderness all the time. “Forever and ever until I’m all old and dusty.”

“No...” Phil laughs softly, cradling Tommy close as he circles around them both, nudging his foot gently at Wilbur’s arm. “Come on, up.”

“I can’t.” Wilbur raises an arm up towards the sky, as if he’s summoning something from the clouds. “My legs! They’re broken.”

Techno doesn’t even try to hide the snort that comes with that.

“You were walking like two minutes ago!” Skeppy calls out, and Wilbur tilts his hand in his direction, then flips him off. Skeppy screams in offense, Bad yelling with him, but for an entirely different reason. Wilbur cackles in glee.

Phil rolls his eyes, only fond. “We can take a break in a bit, okay? I swear we’re really really close.”

“*How* close?” Wilbur squints up at him, a small frown tugging at his lips.

“Hm.” Phil takes a step back, pretending to think about it. “Well, I’d say we’ll arrive there in a day or two.”

Techno shoots up from the ground. “Really?!” He exclaims, Wilbur jolting with surprise from how quickly Techno had gone from being at his side to nearly jumping up onto his feet.

“Yes.” Phil nods, giving a warm smile. He’s kept track of the map and their progress. It’s not far, now. There’s a grassy field that should be up ahead, one that he used to fly over for hours when he had nothing more to do.

Those flights had always been too thoughtful. Too lonely. He wonders if this time around, he can carry someone up there with him.

Past the field, he knows that's where there'll be the start of a few mountains surrounded by forest, and past that, an old home he left a long while ago.

The town he remembers shouldn't be far off. It's the only town around for miles, and from what he remembers, it had been small. A little isolated. Perfect for when he had needed to drop by and grab a few things without many questions. Usually, he was self-sufficient on his own, but some stranger's company never hurt.

Now, he wonders if this town's company will be different if he goes to visit again. Would they know his face? Are there flyers up on the buildings, calling for him and his children, dead or alive?

Maybe so, maybe not. Either way, it'll be a little while until Phil actually goes back there at all. He doesn't want to depend on that for supplies.

"The more breaks we take along the way, the longer it'll be until we're there." Phil tells them, shrugging lightly as Techno stares with wide eyes. Wilbur seems a bit more willing to travel now, but there is still that slight grumpiness sticking to his expression. "Unless you guys are actually tired?"

"I'm not." Techno shakes his head, getting up from the ground and brushing the dirt off his clothes. Wilbur sends him a look of betrayal, and Techno whacks him in the side with his foot.

"I'm injured!" Wilbur cries out instantly, Phil scoffing.

"Oh no. However will you walk now?" Techno deadpans, but there is a small smile on his face that betrays his flat tone. "Guess he needs to be carried." He says, looking directly in Bad's direction.

Bad blinks back, Wilbur giving a dying noise when Techno kicks him again.

“Techno, don’t kick your brother.” Phil says.

“He’s injured.” Techno says, and that should be a reason to not kick Wilbur, but Technoblade doesn’t seem to think so. “Bad, Bad, come pick him up.”

“Oh-” Bad falters, before humming with something kind. “He could sit on my shoulders while we walk?” He offers, glancing towards Phil.

Phil looks down at Wilbur. “Wil?”

“Fine. I- Stop it- I can be carried by- Techno, I’m going to kick you *back*-” Wilbur swings his legs up into the air, Techno running out of range, instead heading behind Phil and tucking himself away in his feathers. Phil feels Techno’s hands grab gently onto his wings, and he shakes his head with a smile, Wilbur sitting up with a glare.

Bad ends up carrying Wilbur for the rest of the way, Wil sitting high on his shoulders and reaching up towards the tree branches as they travel. Eventually, Techno gets curious, and he gets a turn being carried as well, enjoying the height.

At that point, they’ve doomed Bad, who’s fallen into the fate of needing to carry the kids around when they get lazy.

---

Techno’s not sure what to expect when they actually get to the safe place.

Sure, it’ll be home, and sure, it’ll be out of sight of the hunters, but other than that, Techno doesn’t actually *know* anything more.

At first, he hadn't been concerned with the details. As long as he had Phil, it would be good enough. As long as Wilbur was beside him, and Tommy stayed safe, then it was enough.

But now he's a little curious.

So he asks questions.

"Is it a big house?"

Phil smiles, looking down at Techno with a hum. "Not really. But we could make improvements."

"Is it really old?"

He laughs. "It's definitely got some history."

"Is there a forest? A river?"

"There should be a river nearby. And it's right in the middle of the forest."

Then Wilbur caught on with the questions, and they both turned to Phil for the answers, giving their curiosities to him. He answers each one, without fail.

"Are there animals nearby?" Techno asks, as they eat their measly dinner for the night.

"Maybe. They do live there too."

“Are there *people* nearby?” Wilbur questions, just before they go to bed.

Phil pauses with a thoughtful silence. “There’s a town. But it’s a little far, and they won’t be visiting anytime soon.”

“What if we make a farm there?” Techno suggests, early in the morning, Phil still a little groggy as Wilbur curls up at his side. “With a bunch of plants?”

“Well, I did want to make a garden.” Phil nods. “And we do need food somehow.”

“Are Bad and Skeppy going to live in the house with us?” Wilbur whispers, tugging at Phil’s hand as they start their walk for the day, Bad and Skeppy talking to each other just up ahead. “You said the house was small, how are they going to fit?”

“I said the house could just use a bit more extra space.” Phil corrects, squeezing Wilbur’s hand in his. “And Skeppy and Bad had wanted to make their own home away from ours. But they still want to be nearby, so they can visit.”

“Can we have blankets at the house?” Techno asks, swinging around a dirty stick, hitting at a passing tree trunk. “And lots of pillows?”

“All the pillows, mate. You’ll even have your own bed, I promise.”

Techno had only scrunched up his nose a bit at that. He doesn’t want to sleep alone. He just wants a soft place to rest.

---

Wilbur has been singing.

The hours pass by slowly, and sometimes the silence is nice, just everyone continuing in the right direction towards where they need to be. But sometimes it's boring, and when Wil sits on Bad's shoulders, his view higher than ever, he chooses to hum to himself.

Bad sometimes hums with him, his hand curling loosely around his ankle for a moment. Skeppy whistles along occasionally. Phil whistles too, but it's much more precise than Skeppy's, the notes being quick and practiced. He sometimes whistles his own songs, but that's a rare thing.

Wilbur's usually the musical one.

His humming shifts into something like a tune, and eventually, a song, to which he repeats quietly into the air, entertaining himself with his own sweet voice.

It's not quite like using his charm. Not really. His voice doesn't begin to ache with the use of it, instead there's just a quiet tingling on his throat, his words seeming to swirl around gently.

"Sunshine, hm hm, sunshine..." Wilbur speaks under his breath, half-humming, half-singing.

"Which song is that?" Bad asks, simply curious.

"Dunno." Wilbur answers honestly, shrugging his shoulders and resting his skin on top of Bad's head. "I think I just heard it once."

"It's very nice."

Wilbur smiles. "Thanks."

---

They stop for the day when the sun begins to set, the nature around them being lit up in a warm sunset color.

Tommy's awake for once, yawning and playing with Wilbur, who holds onto his tiny hands and raises them up high with a giggle. Tommy's tail swings around as he babbles up at Wil, and Techno sits beside them both, watching them interact with a fond warmth in his heart.

They're both so familiar, and this feels so right. He wonders how Tommy is going to be when he's older, bigger. He wonders how Wilbur will be.

He stares at the black scales scattered across Tommy's face, a little shiny against the light, and he tries to imagine that chubby face as something a little older, maybe his own age. Somehow, he's not very happy with the thought. He likes the young face. It's squishy.

He looks to Wilbur's scales instead. They don't exactly shine like Tommy's, they shimmer, a pretty blue against his skin. They look nice with his hair, with it being braided back at the moment, courtesy of Phil.

Techno runs a hand over his own braid with a hum. It's been falling apart since like an hour ago. He oughta ask Phil to redo it.

"Technoblade." Phil calls, Techno turning his head away from his brothers, seeing Phil standing off to the side by the trees. He reaches a hand out, beckoning Techno over as he glances at something off to the side. "Come here for a second."

Skeppy glances over from where he and Bad are sorting out their dwindling supplies. Bad is trying to talk to him, noting the low amount of food they have, but Skeppy's attention stays on Techno as he gets up and walks over, curious as to what Phil needs.

“Come look.” Phil smiles, crouching down to Techno’s level, resting a hand on his back. “Over there, in that direction.” He points past the branches, towards a mountain off in the distance. It’s a pretty sight, with the sunset against it, lighting it up in red and orange.

Techno leans forward, squinting a little.

“That’s where our home is going to be.” Phil whispers, and Technoblade whips his head towards him, eyes wide.

Phil gives him an overjoyed smile, nearly giddy with it, and Techno slowly grows a smile in return. “Look, look-” He pulls Techno closer, pointing a finger up at the mountain side, Techno giving all his attention to him. “Right there, in that little area where the mountain curves in, there’s a hill right beside it. I built the house there a long time ago, so it’s going to be a little worn down by now, but it’ll be right there, with the sunset over the mountaintop...”

Techno nods, listening to each word, his heart growing with anticipation. He wants to run towards it, wants to tug Wilbur off the ground from where he’s sitting, demand for Phil to fly them over right now.

But he’s patient. He can wait.

Besides. It’s so close. It won’t even take much more than an hour to get there.

---

Wilbur wakes up to Tommy crying.

It’s not a normal type of crying. There’s a bit of pain woven into it, Tommy wailing out into the night with Phil’s hushed voice speaking quickly. Bad and Skeppy are talking too, their voices a little panicked, worried, and Tommy is nearly screaming with his sobs.

Something is wrong.

“Techno.” Wilbur immediately reaches a hand out to his brother, pushing him awake as fast as he can. “Technoblade.” He whispers, sitting up and leaning over him, Techno opening his eyes with a grumpy look. It fades away as he hears Tommy, though, and he sits up abruptly, nearly smacking foreheads with Wil.

“What’s going on?” Techno asks, looking around, trying to see past the dark. He hears Tommy’s cries, and his heart drops upon hearing the way it sounds desperate. “Wilbur?”

“I don’t know.” Wil answers honestly, fear curling into his heart. He searches around, looking in the direction of the noise, and he spots Phil sitting on the ground not that far away, Bad and Skeppy huddled up beside him.

Techno crawls forward, Wilbur grabbing at his arm, not willing to be left alone. Technoblade just grabs him by the hand and pulls them both onto their feet, the two of them stumbling through the dark towards Phil.

“-fucking shit, shit, of all times-” Skeppy is swearing, his hands grabbing at the supplies scattered around them, having a bit of frantic energy.

“*Skeppy*.” Bad hisses.

“-sorry, sorry-”

“Dad?” Wilbur calls, and Skeppy freezes, looking up. Wilbur can’t see his face in the dark, but he can see Phil, his eyes glowing *bright* against the shadows around them. “What’s- Is Tommy okay?”

Bad moves towards them nearly instantly, hands held out, trying to cover Phil from view. “Oh, no, no, everything is okay. We just had a bit of a scare-” He kneels down in front of them both, his voice reassuring.

“What happened?” Techno asks, trying to look over Bad’s shoulder. Bad is tall, though, so it’s a bit hard to do. “Is Tommy hurt?”

“I- Well,” Bad holds a hand out, maybe to offer some comfort, and Wilbur pushes it away, leaning into Techno with a snarl.

“Fucking move!” Wilbur swears, and Bad doesn’t even comment on the swear.

“Boys.” Phil says, and immediately Wilbur calms down, Techno lifting his head. “Skeppy, here, here-”

“Yeah, I- Okay, I got him. Go on, go ahead.” Skeppy responds, and Bad scoots to the side, Phil quickly making his way over and kneeling down on the ground beside him. Tommy continues to cry, but it’s just a little muffled, his face pressed against Skeppy’s shirt, now.

“Dad, dad, what’s-?” Wilbur breathes out, on the edge of a sob rather quickly with the thoughts running through his head. “Did, did something happen?” He reaches out towards Phil, and Phil holds a hand up to make him pause.

“Ah, ah. My hands are dirty, mate, I don’t want to stain your shirt.” Phil speaks quietly, gently.

Techno only stares, squeezing Wilbur’s hand a little too tight. “Is that *blood*?”

Wilbur’s eyes drop down to where Techno’s looking, and sure enough, there is blood, stained into Phil’s palms, fresh, recent. Terror sinks into them both within the next second, cold and heavy.

Phil sees the tears welling up and the panic coming in, and he leans in close, still speaking softly. “Shh, it’s alright. It’s okay, it’s okay. Listen, okay? Just listen to me.” He rests his hands down on the ground, the dirt sticking to his fingers as he leans closer towards them. “You know how Tommy has been sleeping a lot lately?”

Techno nods, biting his tongue as Wilbur curls his arms around his sleeve.

“Turns out that was for a reason. He was growing *wings*.” Phil’s own feathers shift with his words, stretching out a bit, blocking away Tommy’s crying, the sight of Skeppy holding him carefully, blood smeared over Tommy’s back.

Phil’s missing his coat. Instead, it’s currently on the ground beside Skeppy, a bit torn so they could clean off Tommy.

“Wings?” Wilbur chokes out, Technoblade feeling just as baffled. “Like- Like yours?”

Past the worry, Techno finds the new information to be incredible.

Tommy is just like Phil, then.

Phil chuckles, shaking his head. “No, not exactly. They’re a bit different. But he is hurting a lot from them, so he’s going to be crying for a bit.” He pauses, then stands up on his feet, his wings folding out. He turns to Bad. “I’m heading to the town nearby.”

Skeppy shifts from where he’s sitting down. “Woah, hey, hey, wait a minute-”

“Phil-” Bad stands up as well, looking down at Phil with an argument on the tip of his tongue.

“It’s the dead of night, I can fly over quickly, and all we need is some sort of potion, or medicine.” Phil waves a hand, his mind already made up. “I know where it is. I’m not arguing with you over this, Tommy needs something to help with the pain.”

He turns to Wil and Techno, leaning down. “You two stay here with Bad and Skeppy, okay?”

“But-” Wilbur goes to speak, Phil shaking his head.

“I know, it’s dangerous, but Tommy is really hurting right now, and we need something to help.”

Wilbur closes his mouth, an anxious feeling rippling down across his skin. He doesn’t want Phil to leave anywhere, but Tommy is still sobbing, still crying with pain, and he’s not getting any better.

“Go.” Techno suddenly says, both Wilbur and Phil turning to him, Phil with slight surprise.

Techno shares a glance with Wilbur, giving a tiny nod. Something like understanding settles onto Wil’s expression and they both turn back to Phil, Wilbur holding a hand out and pushing at Phil’s arm.

“Go, don’t just wait, just go!” Wilbur insists, and Phil nods, looking towards Bad as he steps back.

“Keep an eye on them.” Phil says.

“Be careful.” Bad responds, and Phil only nods, running out past the trees, and taking flight into the sky.

---

Late at night, while the town is quiet and asleep, a monster flies close.

It circles around, searching the streets and the buildings, then swoops down with the cover of the dark, landing quietly behind a small shop.

A window latch is snapped open with a sturdy rock, and the monster climbs through without a single noise, quick, quiet, searching.

It looks through the shelves, poking at the bottles, leaving small blood stains behind, red fingerprints on the glass. Eventually, it finds what it's looking for, and it takes it with a soft sigh, holding the potion in its clawed hands.

A little girl with pink hair stands in the hallway with a tiny gasp. She's frozen still, a hand over her mouth, shock sinking past her shoulders as bright blue eyes turn towards her, watching. Looking.

The monster has wings. Big, black, feathered wings, and they shift as the monster stares, just as still as her.

Then, the monster raises a finger up over his lips, giving a small smile through the dark.

"Shhh." He says, and the girl nods, watching as the monster leaves just as quietly as he came, one bottle gone from her father's shelves.

Phil takes the healing potion back to his son, knowing full well that even if that child says anything of seeing him, it'll only be taken as a child's late night fear. A nightmare.

He's got the wrong idea, though. She hadn't been scared.

She was amazed.

## Chapter End Notes

oh yeah, fun fact.

The little girl is Niki.

anyhow! Thanks for reading, this chapter is dedicated to my good friend six :D

till next chapter!!

# Home

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Come on, come on!” Wilbur nearly trips over his feet, pushing at the dirt underneath him to continue running, Techno hot on his heels.

Even with the rough terrain, they keep running up the hill, gasping for air and laughing in anticipation, just waiting for the sight of a house tucked away past the trees, the sight of home. It’s so close, it’s right there, Wilbur can practically *see* it. The door and the windows and the potential, right in reach, right in his palms.

Home. Right there.

“Slowpoke!” Techno calls out, taking his chance as Wilbur stumbles. He chuckles in victory, then shrieks in surprise as Wilbur lunges forward to grab at the back of his shirt, dragging them both down to the ground. They both nearly roll down the hill.

“Boys!” Phil yells out, his voice far, but not out of sight. From here, Wilbur can hear Skeppy talking, Bad giving a light laugh. They’re so slow, he thinks, and he then yanks at Techno’s hair, just to be a little shit.

“Ow, ow-!” Techno hits him in the face, pushing him away. They both separate and land into the dirt, swinging their feet out at each other. “Cheater!”

“Am not!” Wilbur breathlessly denies, giggling as Techno wacks him in the ankle. He scoots back, then rolls onto his knees, quickly standing to his feet. “I was just making it fair!” He yells, and he starts to run, Techno making a failed attempt at grabbing him.

Wilbur runs, continuing up the hill, following the stone path that is barely visible underneath the dirt and grass. Phil had said it was a good path once. They just need to clean it, re-make

it, because it got overgrown when Phil had left.

Now it can be better, newer. Now it's *theirs*.

Technoblade follows after his brother, giving a groan of frustration, but still laughing, too eager to really be upset. They're both humming with excitement, with energy. Phil couldn't slow them down even if he tried.

And he did try. Somewhat.

"Wil!" Phil calls again, a grin on his face as he only hears high laughter past the trees. "Techno! Wait up for us!" He says, but it's futile. There was no stopping them from the second they saw the stone path, knowing what it led to.

"Eh, let them run." Skeppy shrugs, adjusting the bag of their supplies over his shoulders. Bad holds most of the stuff, being stronger, but Skeppy still insists upon helping. "Maybe it'll tire them out enough so they won't be all hyper at lunchtime."

"Doubt that." Phil shakes his head, lowering his attention down to Tommy being held in his arms.

He's been asleep ever since last night, and his back looks miles better with the potion that Phil had grabbed, but even so, there is still that weight of worry. They've done all they could, they've cleaned off the blood and fixed up every last scratch, but until Tommy wakes up, Phil will fret over him just a bit, holding him close against his chest.

The wings on his back are beautiful.

They're truly dragon wings, no doubt about it. Pitch black with shiny scales, they're tough and new, and they're so *small*. Phil knows they'll grow into something magnificent, something big and strong. And with *that*, will come the habit of a child constantly trying to glide everywhere.

That's going to be a fun few weeks.

"This path has seen better days." Bad voices, looking down underneath their feet, seeing the way the forest has grown over the stone, hiding it underneath grass and flowers and dirt. "Did you build this?" He asks Phil, seeming quietly impressed.

"I did." Phil hums, staring down at said path before lifting his head back up, looking ahead. He built this entire house with his own two hands. There's going to be an awful lot of things he'll need to fix up, after having left it behind for so long.

He knows that the house is going to be dusty, overgrown and in need of a clean. He also knows that no matter the state of it, it's not going to deter the kids from just sprinting right on through to explore inside.

Wilbur keeps sprinting up head, almost tripping again for what feels like the hundredth time. He smiles, pushes forward, and then stops suddenly, the momentum almost tipping him over.

Techno stops with him, eyes wide, standing just beside Wilbur. They both pant with exhaustion, faces red and their hands and sleeves covered with dirt, but they wear matching expressions, matching looks of disbelief and joy.

There, on the top of the hill, in the middle of tall grass and flowers, sits a small stone house. There's a chimney and a big wooden door, the porch seeming practically fallen apart, with green growth stretched across it. There's old, dusty windows offering a peek inside, vines reaching up over the old roof, seeming to try and hide it away.

It's a memory of a home. A building taken over by the forest, withered away with time.

It's *perfect*.

Both Techno and Wilbur seem to move in unison, instantly running forward and forgetting that there even was a race to the top. They step through the growth with grass tickling at their ankles, and they make a mad dash towards the front door, Wilbur grabbing at the handle first, eager and impatient.

“Is it locked?” Techno asks, Wilbur pushing and pulling and only getting a quiet creak with each movement. “Do you think Phil even has the key?” He wonders, glancing back down the stone path, where the adults are still walking up at their own pace.

“We already have the key.” Wilbur insists, slamming his shoulder into the door. The wood makes a loud groan, and he gives a wild grin. “It’s called breaking and entering.”

Techno blinks, then instantly gets on board, nudging Wilbur to the side for him to try. Wilbur steps aside over a patch of flowers, lifting his head with careful attention.

Technoblade pushes at the wood, humming, and then slams into it with his shoulder, just like how Wilbur did. He seems to pack more of a punch with it, though, because the door swings open with a loud crack, and Techno screams as he falls inside.

Wilbur laughs with the clap of his hands, leaning in through the doorway. He watches as Techno pushes himself up and sneezes with the dust that’s flown up into the air.

He turns his head behind him to look up at Wil. “Got it.”

With a roll of his eyes, Wilbur helps him up, pulling him onto his feet. Techno gives a cough, shaking his head, but he seems alright, so Wilbur moves his attention onto the interior of the house they’ve just entered, taking in the room around them.

There’s grass scattered across the floorboards, more vines climbing up the walls, and Wilbur traces across the sight of it, leads his vision over to a low wooden table with carvings etched into it, a vase sitting on top. There’s a plush chair beside it, a blue blanket laying over its arm, looking comfy and warm, even with the dust. A fireplace rests across from the couch, up against the wall with plants growing where the firewood should be.

Wilbur moves slowly, heading towards the table with his hand stretched out, his fingers grazing over the designs. He leans closer, tries to see the picture carved in there as Techno goes over to the couch, poking at the cushion and running his hand over the discarded blanket.

“This place is dirty.” Techno notes, lifting his hand up and finding dust sticking to it. He walks over to Wilbur’s side, taking Wilbur’s hand in his and staring down at the table with him.

“I’ve slept in worse spots.” Wilbur says softly, his voice quiet. He traces over the carvings once more, and finds it to be a depiction of clouds, swirling and interwoven into a neat design. He lifts his head, looking around at the walls, finding more carvings hidden away around the doorway, on the baseboard, and he realizes that even with how the home looks abandoned, there’s a strange amount of life still left in it.

The carvings are just a part of it. There’s a painting of some sort hung on the wall by the front door, the sunlight shining on it. It’s a little faded, but it’s colorful, bright. It reminds Wilbur of a flowerfield.

He pulls Techno along, out of the living room, towards a hallway. The floorboards squeak with their weight, and they pass two doors. One of them is just a bathroom. But the other is a quiet, old bedroom.

There’s more carvings on this one, and it’s more complicated than just the clouds on the table. There’s wings and feathers and a heart that looks awfully similar to the one around Phil’s neck. Techno reaches a hand out to it, his fingertips resting against the heart, and he looks at Wilbur, the two of them seeming to agree on something.

Techno opens the door, the doorknob twisting with a click. He leads Wil inside, and they both stay silent, moving carefully, curiosity and anticipation hovering over them both.

There’s a big bed with dark green sheets placed in the corner, a nightstand beside it. Immediately, Wilbur can pick out the carvings upon it, a picture made on the bed’s headboard. A bookshelf sits straight across from the bed, filled with not just books, but also

tiny wooden sculptures of some sort. Beside the bookshelf, there's a desk, with papers and pencils still left on top of the table. Wilbur turns his head with a quiet breath, and he spots a wardrobe, more designs etched into the wood, a woven basket beside it.

Each thing here seems to hold so much effort. Like it was all made carefully, lovingly. Wilbur can't imagine how Phil ever made the choice to leave it.

Techno pulls away from Wilbur to reach up towards the bookshelf, grabbing a small wooden figure on the shelf. He holds it carefully in his palm, dusting it off, and he finds it to be a sculpture of a woman with wings. She's beautiful, smiling, and Technoblade puts it back quietly, wondering.

Wilbur focuses on the wooden desk. He runs his hands over the carvings- more carvings, more life- and then pulls open a drawer, finding drawings, sketches.

"I didn't know dad could draw." Wilbur whispers. Techno leans closer to see, and he stares for a moment, before lifting his eyes up to Wilbur and shrugging lightly. Wilbur closes the drawer.

There's a basket put to the side in the corner, filled with metal tools, things Wilbur doesn't know how to use. There's a big chest against the wall, and when Wil lifts it open with a grunt, he finds paints and bottles, pieces of cloth. He gives another look to Techno, and they both shrug this time.

They look through the wardrobe that's in the other corner of the room, and they find old outfits with holes for Phil's wings in the back. They find boots and armor, a sword tucked away behind a pile of pants. Wilbur holds it by the handle, lifting it out, and Techno stares at it with wide eyes, touching his own sword on his hip, like he's comparing it, or rather, imagining himself to be having a sword just like that.

"This is definitely dad's." Techno says, poking at the metal blade, Wilbur putting it down on the ground and leaving the wardrobe wide open. They continue snooping around.

Techno finds a guitar underneath the bed, the strings giving an out of tune noise when Wilbur plucks at one of them. It's painted with soft colors, drawings that remind Wilbur of the painting over in the living room.

Wil finds a knife in the nightstand drawer, and stares upon realizing it's got a bright red jewel at the center of it. It's not quite a weapon, more just something pretty. Shiny.

Techno finds a spider by the window, a spider web across the glass, and Wilbur blows at it, watching the creature skitter away.

Eventually, Wilbur glances down the hall once more, and realizes they haven't even gotten to the rest of the house, a kitchen still waiting for them at the end. He calls Techno and drags him over there by the hand, finding cabinets and high counters, a big wooden table with windows all around, letting the sun pour in. The kitchen holds just as much life as everything else does. There are still carvings and paint found in the wood.

"Never thought dad would make a house with so many drawings on it." Techno says off-handedly, walking behind the counter, reaching up at a sink with clean dishes still left inside. He grabs a cup, holds it in his hands with the knowledge that these dishes are also theirs, now.

"I think it fits." Wilbur responds, opening each cabinet one by one. He finds kitchenware and plates and old containers with herbs. "It seems like something he would do."

"Painting?" Techno puts the cup onto the counter. "I've never even seen him carve anything before."

Wilbur looks through the next cabinet, pushing at an old pot. "Maybe he could carve something for us." He moves onto the next one. "I'm going to ask him to carve a- AHH-!"

Technoblade spins around with a hand on his sword, his other arm reaching out as Wilbur falls backwards with surprise, landing onto the rough floor. Something escapes from the cabinet he had just opened, and Wilbur sits up with a jolt.

“Catch it!” He demands, before he’s even recovered from his fall. Techno watches the thing run past his feet, towards the kitchen table, and he chases after it without hesitation, realizing that it’s a small mouse that’s spooked Wil.

He jumps at it, slamming onto the ground with his hands just barely missing, and the mouse keeps running, Wilbur going after it, crawling underneath the wooden table to follow.

The chairs screech as he pushes them to the side, his hand grabbing out and hitting the floorboards. Techno gets up, quickly helping him in the chase, crawling underneath the table as well.

“Get it, get it!”

“Over there!”

“Ah! It’s going towards you!”

The chairs screech again as Techno moves them out of the way, and Wilbur squeals in surprise, the mouse running over his knee.

“Techno? Wil?” Phil’s voice echos out from the front door.

Phil steps inside the house slowly, looking around like he’s half-expecting the place to fall apart around him. His hand rests on the back of Tommy’s head, fingers brushing through blond curls. His wings shift behind him with a bit of nervous energy, and his feathers brush against the doorway for just a second.

The floorboards creak underneath his feet as he turns his head, taking in his home and all the memories that are carved into the walls. He turns in place, dragging his gaze across the vines and the wear and tear that age has left behind. It’s the same as he left it, exactly the same, but

he feels as if he's looking through a different perspective this time around. The place is overgrown and practically abandoned, but it seems...bright. Better. Even with the dust.

He feels a little more hopeful, this time around, looking at these walls.

His attention settles onto the painting hanging on the wall to the side, and he smiles gently. He holds Tommy a little closer.

“Boys.” Phil calls again, turning his head down the hall, taking a slow step forward. He pauses at hearing Wilbur scream with joy, Techno cackling in glee.

“GOT IT!”

Phil blinks, staying in place. “What are you two doing in the kitchen?”

There’s the sound of chairs screeching as an answer, tiny footsteps heading his way, and Phil watches as Wil and Techno run down the hall, towards him, to show off their victory; a tiny mouse held tightly in Wilbur’s claws.

“Look what we got, look, dad-!” Wilbur beams, holding the poor thing up higher, right in Phil’s face. Techno grins wide, reaching a hand out towards the mouse, tapping it on top of its head. It squeaks with terror.

“Is- Is that a mouse?” Phil asks, Techno nodding furiously.

“We caught it, I found it in the kitchen, look-” Wilbur lifts the animal up higher, and Phil leans away, holding Tommy close in his arms.

“Okayyy.” Phil laughs a little, their excitement rubbing off on him. A small mischievous smile creeps across his face. He leans in towards them both, speaking quietly. “Go show Skeppy, yeah?” He nods towards the front door, where Skeppy had just walked in.

He screams bloody murder upon having Wilbur run at him with a tiny mouse in hand.

---

They end up putting their stuff down and make a start on cleaning the inside. The windows are opened, dust is swept off the counters, and roots are torn out from the floorboards, being put outside instead, where they belong.

Skeppy finds a broom and puts it to good use in the kitchen, while Bad takes a basket and rounds up whatever piece of fabric that can be cleaned, aiming to take it to the river Phil had said was nearby.

“It’s the path to the left of the house, mate.” Phil says, leaning out the front doorway, Bad heading off to go see the stream. “That one, past there.” He points a finger up, one arm still holding a sleeping Tommy to his chest.

“Got it, got it.” Bad nods, looking around at the forest, finding a few more paths leading off towards the trees. “Where do the other paths go?” He asks, raising his eyebrows.

Phil shrugs with a grin. “I’ll show you around later. I know I’ve got a garden far off somewhere...” He hums, wondering just how overgrown that area has gotten. He’s going to need to put a lot of work into these weeks.

Wilbur and Techno chase around their mouse in the hall, Skeppy screaming once or twice when he finds the critter running past his feet, with Techno and Wilbur lunging after it not a second after. The poor thing is going to flop over and perish from stress at any point now.

Phil heads into his old room, stripping the covers off the bed and placing them to the side, making a note to take them down to the river later. He sets Tommy down gently, so the boy has somewhere soft to rest, and so his arms can have a bit of a break.

“This is your room, right?” Wil asks from the doorway, Phil glancing behind him as he stands up straight, sitting beside Tommy’s sleeping figure. “You never mentioned you could draw.”

“Where’d you get that sword?” Techno asks, their mouse in his hand, his eyes pointed at the weapon that’s sitting on the floor, left in front of the wardrobe that is just wide open.

“You two already looked through my things that quickly?” Phil asks, a bit of a teasing note in his voice. Both his boys turn their heads to the ground. “Come here.”

Wilbur goes first, practically crashing into Phil’s arms, climbing up on the bed to sit beside him. Techno leans into the bed, the mouse held within his palms as he looks towards Tommy, listening to his tiny snores.

“You have a guitar, and a knife, and a bunch of tools.” Wilbur says, like Phil doesn’t know it already, since it is his room. “You have a lot of jars in the kitchen.”

Phil snorts, brushing Wilbur’s hair back, out of his face. “And they’re all a mess.”

“Not really.” Techno hums. “It’s just dirty. Dusty.” He brushes off dirt from the little mouse’s head, smiling. “Did you used to paint as a hobby?”

“I did.” Phil nods, Wilbur tugging at his sleeve.

“And you know how to carve stuff?” He asks. “How did you do that?” He points towards the doorway, the designs etched in.

Phil smiles. “I’ll tell you both all about it after we’ve cleaned up a bit, okay? This house is practically falling apart. I’m pretty sure the kitchen has got a whole ecosystem in the cabinets.”

“We can watch Tommy for you.” Techno suggests climbing onto the bed. “So you can go help Skeppy.” He says, pretending like this is definitely not just an excuse to get out of helping with chores.

Phil knows what he’s doing. “You sure? Don’t want to come wash dishes with me?”

Wilbur frowns a bit, scrunching his nose. “Nahhh.”

“Alright then.” Phil laughs, getting up from the bed. “You both keep an eye on Tommy. Come for me if he wakes up, okay?”

They both nod, scooting closer to the baby, Wilbur staring at him intensely like Tommy’s going to burst into flames at any second. Phil nods, stepping towards the door before pausing.

“And Techno?”

Techno raises his head.

“Go put that poor mouse outside, mate.”

Techno huffs.

---

The day passes quickly, with all the work in their hands.

Phil cleans the kitchen, helps with Skeppy to reorganize the jars and dishes after scrubbing them down, cleaning out the cabinets and chasing out any lasting mice. Bad makes a few

more trips over to the river, both to wash items and to bring water back for cleaning. Techno and Wilbur don't do much in terms of cleaning, but they do tidy up Phil's room a little, keeping a diligent eye on Tommy the entire time, taking their job as older brothers very very seriously.

You can't blame them for being a little protective, with the night beforehand.

The sun quietly begins to set, red-orange just barely starting to creep it's way across the horizon, and when Phil goes to check on his boys, he finds them all sleeping on his bed, Techno and Wilbur curled up around Tommy. The excitement of the day seemed to have caught up quick, and they crashed hard, by the looks of it.

Phil lets them sleep.

He heads out of the house, asking Bad and Skeppy to watch their volume, and to watch the kids as he goes out into the forest to check on something more past one of his stone paths.

"Going to go see how bad your gardens have gotten after all this time?" Skeppy asks, waving Phil off as he goes towards a path by the back of the house.

Phil laughs. "Yup. Gotta see how many weeds I'm going to be pulling out for the next few days."

Skeppy shrugs, and heads back into the house quietly, leaving Phil to travel on towards the trees.

He heads down an overgrown stone path, one that he's walked over hundreds of times. It's still familiar, after all these years. He swears he still walks this path even in his dreams.

The tiny clearing up ahead isn't far, rather, it's kinda near the house, by design. Phil reaches the end of the path with the sunset washing over him, the forest being quiet, peaceful.

It's a mess of flowers here, a mess of grass and roots and leaves scattered around. The sun shines on through the tree branches, little bits of light through the shade, and at the center of it all, there is a piece of stone, just waiting.

A grave. With wings carved into the rock, a design meticulously made with care.

Phil smiles at it, but it doesn't quite reach his eyes. His wings shift from behind him, almost wrapping around him.

"Hello, love." He greets, lowering his head upon Kristin's resting spot. "Sorry that I've been away."

He makes his way through the growth, stepping slowly, taking his spot beside the gravestone, sitting in the flowers and the grass.

"I've been busy." Phil hums. "Went traveling, like I said I would. I found something."

The carving in the rock has worn down a bit with time, and he traces his finger across it, making a note to polish it up as soon as he can.

"Found *someone*, more like. Multiple someones. There was-" He pauses. Clears his throat. "There was another prophecy, apparently. The end of the world kind, you know? Three monsters fated to kill life as we know it, or something like that..."

"I went after them. I couldn't just- let them die, because they would be killed on their own, I know it. People got afraid, so I had to go find them."

"I took them in. I've got three sons now. You would love them, I promise. Techno is a little shy sometimes, but he's smart. Quick with a sword, too. He might even end up beating me in a fight one day when he's older. Won't that be something?"

“Wilbur’s a bit skittish, but he’s sharp. Thoughtful. I’m sorry to admit I got to him late, but he’s safe now. He’s alright now. I’m going to- I’ll, I’ll keep him safe. He’ll never have to live like how he did ever again.”

“And Tommy, he’s...” Phil stops, blinking slowly, watching the world blur in his vision. “Kristin, he’s got *wings*. They’re so small, and perfect- and I know they’re not like ours, not- not with feathers, or anything, but I can’t help but-”

He leans his head against the stone, smiling, even with the tears down his face.

“It’s been a while since I’ve had anyone like me. You think he’ll be able to fly with me one day?”

A breeze flows through the forest with a gentle whistle. Phil hums, his wings curling around himself.

“I hope so. It’ll be good. This will be good.”

“I’m going to raise them here, by the mountain. I’ll protect them here, hide them away. They won’t ever have to even think about the prophecy, I’ll- I’ll let them just forget about it. Let them live happily.”

Phil sighs, content. “I can’t wait.”

He sits there for a while more, talking quietly, letting the forest listen. The sun sets, bit by bit, and as the sky starts to dim, that’s when he deems it time to head back home, to his family waiting.

He gives a goodbye, just a temporary one, and promises to be back soon, to clean up the flowers and to recarve the stone wings.

He leaves, with his necklace glowing red around his neck, always healing, always bright.

Always full of *life*.

## Chapter End Notes

you kinda gotta imagine, what would Phil DO with all the time he was given? The guy is alone, like, entirely alone, hiding out with just grief. He probably picked up a lot of hobbies to cope.

I like to imagine he threw himself into Creating as a way of spite, like to show destiny he wasn't just meant to be this angel of death, but rather just an avian who's made a small home with wooden carvings and pretty paintings.

Now he gets to bring his sons along on that train of spite. Instead of following a path of destruction, they thrive on their own, in a home with love and safety.

What fun. The story isn't near over btw. I'd say we're like,,, a third of the way through my planned plot? We got plenty of change fate content to go, so buckle up!

Thank you for reading :]

(also I'd like to just say that Kristin has got a bigger role in the plot than you'd think. Not for right now, but yknow...magical world....with magic.....anything could happen...

hehe. We'll see.)

# Rainy mornings

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When Phil wakes up, it's to the smell of rain and the weight of children resting on his limbs.

The morning is quiet and wet. The clouds outside aren't a raging storm, but it is rain, nevertheless. A simple spring shower. The water pours down from the sky and falls upon their old little house, where the family inside stays nice and dry.

There is the sound of raindrops reaching to Phil's ears. Not just from outside the window, but from inside the room as well.

As it turns out, with all the years that Phil has been away, the roof has seemed to develop a few leaks here and there.

They'd only found that out last night, when the rain had begun to fall, and with it, puddles forming inside the hallway. Bad had frantically gone to help Phil put jars out to collect the rain, so as to preserve the creaky floorboards from getting any worse.

Techno and Wilbur hadn't been as bothered by the leaks as the adults were, though. They made a game of it, the game being getting Tommy to hold his hand out over a jar and watch as a raindrop landed onto the back of his hand.

Apparently, water splashing onto his scales was just the damn funniest thing in the world to Tommy.

He would pull his hand back in surprise, then burst into uncontrollable giggles. He'd scream, and wag his tail, and smile wide, and after Wil and Techno were done laughing with him, they would adjust his hand out over the jar once more, and wait with anticipation for the leaky roof to offer up another drop of rain. After a moment, the roof would never disappoint, and down again another raindrop, landing onto Tommy's hand, sending him into yet another giggle fit.

That was the game. Just the three of them playing with the rain, sitting in the middle of the dimly lit hall. They repeated it over and over until Phil had to drag them off to bed, the night growing late.

Now, the kids lay sleeping against Phil's side. Wilbur rests curled up against the left of his waist, held underneath one of Phil's arms. Techno sleeps on his right, his head more tucked onto Phil's shoulder, his feet pressed against his side. Tommy sleeps squarely on top of his chest, sprawled out on his stomach with his tiny hands gripping onto Phil's shirt.

Phil loves them so much.

But his wings are being absolutely crushed from underneath him.

It's not a comfortable position, and he can tell he's going to be sore once he stands up, but he can't bring himself to move. Tommy just looks so *peaceful* where he is, and Wilbur's snoring so very softly, and Techno's cheek is pressed right up to Phil's collarbone, and-

Phil gives a gentle, happy sigh. All's right with the world.

The morning has already approached by now, judging by the dim light coming from the window. Phil can't quite tell how far into the morning it is, since the clouds have blocked out so much of the sun, but he reckons it's early enough to spare a few extra minutes.

He stares up at the ceiling with a hum in the back of his throat, the noise dragging on until it grows into a light chirp. Phil glances down at Tommy, almost expecting an instant reaction, but Tommy sleeps on. Phil smiles anyhow.

A noise of raindrops continues on in his ears as he slowly fully wakes up for the day, and he turns his head to the side to look at the jars scattered across his room. Three jars, placed across the floor, all to catch the rainwater leaking from above. One just in front of his door, one at the foot of the bed, and one right in the center of the room.

*Plink*, the raindrops go, as they land into the container, over and over until it collects into something more. *Plink, plink, plink*.

The jars are less full than how they were when Phil fell asleep. He assumes Bad came to switch them out while they were asleep. Both him and Skeppy have been keeping busy these past few nights, trying to get the house into something a little less dusty and worn down.

Bad seems to enjoy the work. He's been mopping the kitchen and wiping down the halls with a happy tune in his throat, his words being-

"I want to see what it's like when it's not all, well." He shrugged, giving Phil a sheepish look. "Dirty."

Phil had only laughed with that, admiring the way the hall looked a little brighter, now that all the dirt had been firmly scrubbed away. "It's long due for a clean and repair, to be honest."

Skeppy isn't so keen on the cleaning. But he does seem determined on fixing the floorboards up, after having tripped on a few dips more than once. The roots from before had left their mark, and their curse, seeing as Skeppy had been the only one to be falling over from uneven flooring.

Techno and Wilbur had found it funny, at least. And what they laughed at, Tommy laughed at. So all the children were thoroughly amused with Skeppy slamming into the ground after having mistepped.

Phil listens close for the noise of any voices talking nearby. Faintly, he can make out Bad's words somewhere in the kitchen, but that's all. Just a muffled half of a conversation.

He listens to the rain instead, the pattering against the window being much louder than any hushed sentences down the hall. He listens to the soft breathing and snoring around him, and listens to his own quiet wheeze as he lets out a long breath.

The morning is nice. It's filled with rain and a safe home, and all of Phil's kids being held in his arms.

It's good.

But he can't manage to sit still for much more than ten minutes before needing to move and free his wings from the discomfort of being crumpled underneath his back.

Needless to say, the children are grumpy about being woken up.

Phil winces as Techno yanks at his hair for a moment, making a grumbled out noise as Wilbur tries to dig himself into Phil's hip.

"Mate." Phil whispers, Technoblade giving his best attempt at hiding away into Phil's neck. "Techno- ow, ow-" Again with the hair. Phil had really hoped he left that habit as a toddler, but ever since they've gotten to their home, Technoblade's only gotten clinger. He's not sure what to think of it, honestly. It's a bit endearing, to be fair. But then again, Phil thinks anything they do is endearing. Even when Tommy tries to eat the frogs outside.

Said baby makes an unhappy sigh from where he rests on Phil's chest, turning his head to the other side and trying to be more comfortable. Phil goes absolutely still for a second, and it all returns to peace. Tommy settles back into sleep, Techno loosens his grasp, and Wilbur is blissfully silent.

He tries to move again.

"Nooo." Wilbur whines, feeling Phil nudge him away from his spot. He squeezes his eyes shut and tries to pull at Phil's shirt to convince him to keep still. "It's not *morning*."

Phil holds back a snort. "It actually is, Wil. It's just rainy."

“Is not.” Wil responds, hands held on tight to Phil’s sleeve as he slowly sits up. A miserable noise comes from his throat as Phil slowly sits up from bed, his wings trying their best to stretch out into the pillows.

“Take your brother, Techno.” Phil says, carefully moving Tommy off his chest and onto the bed to replace where he had been sleeping. Hopefully, his efforts will distract the two of them to let him escape for just a second.

Techno thankfully relents and lets go of Phil’s hair, curling up around Tommy nearly right away. He rests a hand over blond curls, giving a small huff, before cracking his eyes open to stare at Wil for a moment, who is not nearly as easily swayed by Tommy as he is.

“Wil, my shirt.” Phil sits hunched to the side, courtesy of Wilbur yanking at him whilst half-asleep. Phil swears these children get a death grip whenever they’re woken up in the morning, honestly.

“*My* shirt.” Wilbur repeats, still not letting go of Phil’s sleeve. He kicks his legs up to hit at Phil’s waist, and Phil scoffs fondly.

“Wilbur.” Phil shakes his arm, trying to get his son to let go. “Go back to bed, mate, I’m going to go make some food.”

“I don’t *want* food.” Wilbur frowns, desperately trying to tug Phil closer so he can wrap his arms around his hand and keep him from escaping. “I want you to not leave.”

“I want to go back to sleep.” Techno mumbles, closing his eyes as Wilbur’s nose scrunches up with another whine.

“I’ll be right back, Wil.” Phil leans forward, pressing a kiss onto Wil’s forehead. Wilbur takes the opportunity to try and get a good grip on Phil’s arm, but Phil’s had this experience more than once. Slowly, one by one, he pries off Wilbur’s fingers from his wrist, and all the while, Wilbur makes a noise of dramatic suffering. Techno huffs again in annoyance.

“Go back to bed. Sleep with your brothers.” Phil suggests, his arm finally free, and Wilbur faceplants into the covers out of despair. Phil pats comfortingly at his back, Wil turning his head to give a furiously grumpy glare.

“Fine.” He says, and Phil is just glad he wasn’t tempted to go charming Phil into staying with them. “But only because I get to hug Tommy.”

“*I’m* hugging Tommy.” Techno protests.

Phil tickles lightly at Techno’s foot, getting a weak kick in response. “You can both share. Careful with his wings, okay?”

“Kay.” Techno answers, just as Wilbur shoves at him and whispers “move.”

Phil stands up from the bed, hearing quiet bickering behind his back as he stretches his wings out. They ache a bit as they’re held out into the air, but it settles and leaves soon enough, and Phil sighs, making his way across the room. The argument behind him ends just as quickly as it started, and as he gives one more glance behind him, he finds the three of his kids having gone back to sleep.

What menaces.

Phil smiles, and heads out into the hall to see about breakfast being made, being met with the surprising sight of the floorboards being suddenly repaired. Not just that, but cleaned as well. Thoroughly. It looks nothing like how it did last night.

He wouldn’t say he’s incredibly shocked by it, but he’s caught off guard. Just a day before, there were more than a few spots where Phil needed to step over a tiny gap, or a little rise in the ground. Now, it all sits flat, smoothed out, polished. There’s a few cups and jars scattered all around, placed perfectly to capture the rainwater falling from the roof above. None of them have overfilled, and there are no puddles to be seen. No roots, no cracks, no places to trip and fall.

Phil remembers again that Skeppy and Bad don't sleep during the night. They have to use their free time somehow. He hadn't expected them to use it to just fix up the house, but he appreciates the help either way.

He walks to the kitchen with soft steps, moving around the containers placed on the floor, hearing a conversation grow closer as he heads down the hall. He finds Skeppy sitting at the kitchen table, a teacup-- of which Phil doesn't even remember he owned-- held carefully in his palms.

Bad stands at the counter, seeming to be cleaning off a pile of pots and pans in front of him. A few of the pots are being used to catch rainwater, placed all around the kitchen.

When this rain lets up, they really do have to go repair the roof.

“-technically, it depends on people's currency numbers, because- think about it! I could be worth plenty in one land, but worth like, nothing in another.” Skeppy is saying, tapping a finger against the diamond skin scattered across his face. It clinks against his fingertips, which also is made of diamond as well.

“Well, you're worth hundreds to me.” Bad smiles warmly, looking up from where he's using a towel to wipe at a pan.

Skeppy clicks his tongue in disappointment. “Wow...not even thousands? That cheap?”

Bad's smile falls into a narrowed look. He scrubs a bit harder as Skeppy snickers.

Phil scoffs lightly, their heads suddenly turning to him.

“Morning.” He says, and they both echo back greetings to him, Skeppy pulling a chair out for Phil to sit in beside him. Phil yawns as he sits down, slumping forward in his chair and

resting his head onto the table with a sigh.

“Rough night?” Skeppy asks, raising his eyebrows and taking a sip from his cup.

Phil gives a tired smile his way. “Being used as a pillow for three kids isn’t the best sleeping conditions, I’ll admit.”

“Sounds terrible.” Skeppy hums. “Good thing I don’t have to deal with that.”

Phil snorts. “You could take my spot, if you want.”

“Nope. Thankfully, I’m child proof.” He taps at the shiny rock on his skin once more. “I doubt any of those kids would want me as a pillow. Too uncomfortable, I’ve been told.”

“I don’t think Techno would care. He’ll sleep anywhere as long as it’s a vaguely horizontal surface.” Phil points out, making a flat hand gesture, as if tracing out the shape.

“We’ve got to get them their own beds.” Bad suggests, placing a pot down into a specific pile. “Or their own rooms. Their own space, honestly. You’re all adorable when resting together but I think they’re going to suffocate you one of these days.”

“They’ve got tiny little death grips whenever I wake up.” Phil breathes out, trying to sound annoyed, but he just sounds unbearably fond. “And the house is small. I’ve just got the one room.”

“Then we’ll add a few more, once the rain has passed.” Skeppy shrugs a shoulder, and Bad walks up behind Phil to place an empty teacup down in front of him.

“Tea?” He asks, and Phil sits up, going to nod, before then pausing. He blinks in slight confusion, staring at the cup.

“You guys made tea?” He asks, looking up at Bad to find a small kettle held in his hands. Bad beams with something like pride.

“Just from a few plants outside! I recognized some of them, so...” Bad smiles. “I found a kettle in your cabinets and I got your little stove to work, so I thought I’d make something for me and Skeppy.” Phil looks at the stove in question, which seems better off than it did when they first got here. There’s no more dust on it, so that’s nice.

“Yeah, I need to go through that sometime.” Phil mutters, eyeing the pile of pots and pans laid out on the counter. He can’t for the life of him remember exactly what he has in this house. He knows he spent a rather long amount of time gathering items to live comfortably, but that was so, so long ago, and it’s not like he’s ever kept number of how many *pots* he owns. “And I’ll have tea, mate, thanks.”

Bad pours him a cup. Skeppy leans back in his seat while slurping at his drink, and he stares out the kitchen window, watching the rain pour down. The noise of raindrops surrounds the three of them, the pots and cups placed around the kitchen preventing any water from soaking into the ground.

“I saw you guys redid the floors.” Phil notes, glancing down at the floor. Skeppy looks down with him, looking a little bitter.

“I got tired of tripping on my face.” Skeppy huffs, Bad poorly hiding a laugh.

Phil only smiles, something like anticipation swelling up in his chest. He leans back in his seat, his wings shifting underneath the weight of his back. “About adding more rooms...”

Skeppy lifts his head in interest.

“You think you could help add a second floor onto what we’ve got so far?” Phil asks. “I know I’ve got better tools somewhere, in a chest, probably.”

A second floor would be nice. Phil will admit, they need more room for the kids, for him, and for Bad and Skeppy. So far they've been fine, considering how content Wil and Techno are to share a bed with him, but that's not to say it'll be like that forever. They need their own proper rooms, their own place to have their own things. This is a home, but it can be a lot more.

It just needs some work. Especially with the leaks in the roof.

"We could make good progress over the summer." Skeppy nods. "Should have it done by fall, or sooner."

"Hopefully sooner. It'd be no good to have the place half-done and cold." Bad says.

Phil swallows back a burst of uncontrollable joy of even having this well into the summer, spring, the rest of the year. The rest of his life.

This is his life now. They've made it. They've gotten home, and now his only worries are to take care of it and keep it. It's too sweet a thought, and he closes his eyes with a content sigh.

He opens them right back up at the noise of a door being opened down the hall.

"Daaaad!" Wilbur calls, his voice dragging out, sounding a little hoarse. "Tommy's crying!"

Phil puts his cup down, and gets up out of his seat to answer to his children.

short sweet chapter! Next one will be a long one, pinky promise. we are settling right into the domestic homelife arc and I'm loving it

coming up soon:

- Phil teaching his kids how to carve and paint
- Techno carrying Wilbur like a bag of potatoes
- Tommy biting things like the dragon child he is

ah, its so fun. thanks so much for reading

(ALSO WE HIT 100k WORDS SO THERE'S THAT LMAO)

# Healed with love, or something more

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“What are you doing?”

Phil pauses, glancing over his shoulder to find Techno hovering by the doorway of this little shed he’s in. He leans back on his knees, pulling his attention away from the dusty shelves in front of him.

“Looking for tools.” He answers, grinning.

“Tools for what?” Technoblade persists, leaning his weight further against the doorway, almost to the point where he’s practically slumping against it. Phil wonders if he’s going to slump right down to the floor.

“Gardening.” Phil answers again. He looks back at the mess surrounding him.

The shed isn’t a big thing, not at all, but he was never much of an organized person. Even when this place was still in good use, he never did quite put away his stuff as neatly as he used them. He supposes he’s always been more intricate with his creations rather than the storage of the tools used to make them.

There’s a thick layer of dust over everything in this place. Although Phil’s wiped a good part of it off with an old cloth from his bedroom, it still needs much more cleaning. Spiderwebs are scattered across the corners of the walls, the hinges of his chests squeak and jam when he tries to push them open, and he’s fairly sure he’s spotted a bird’s nest up on his higher shelves. Age has taken its toll, and Phil *would* feel a sense of sadness with it, but it’s hard to be depressed in any kind of way when his Techno is right there within view.

“Gardening.” Techno repeats, Phil humming and glancing around the room for a moment, before looking back at him. “Where are you going to make the garden? What are you going to garden? What tools are you looking for? What’s-”

“Do you want to help me?” Phil cuts him off, sounding a little amused. “Y’know, I thought you were playing with your brothers.” He holds out his hand, turning towards Techno properly.

“Wilbur’s with Tommy.” Techno shrugs, and he steps inside the shed, grabbing onto Phil’s hand and letting himself be tugged a little closer. “They’re out in the shade.”

“And you just wanted to come bother your old dad?” Phil squeezes Techno’s hand with a teasing tilt in his voice, and Technoblade huffs. He squeezes Phil’s hand back.

“I wanted to see what you were doing.” He corrects, but there’s a slight red in his cheeks that Phil knows he was just hoping for Phil’s company. It’s sweet.

“I’m looking for gardening tools.” Phil says after a moment, letting go of Techno’s hand to search through the shelves in front of him again. “Like a hoe, a shovel. Maybe an axe, too.”

“You’re going to cut down the trees?” Techno asks, walking away from Phil to go fiddle with the chests around them.

“No, but I think I’ll have to cut through something.” Phil pulls a crate out from the shelves, looking inside and finding a collection of what looks to be empty flower pots. Hm. Maybe he can put these to good use soon. He puts it to the side. “I have a spot for a garden past the treeline. I used to use it all the time. But it’s no doubt overgrown now.”

“It’s probably filled with weeds.” Technoblade states, and he yanks with a grunt at one of the lids of a chest, trying to tug it open. Phil turns to him, meaning to help, but he’s got it by the time Phil’s stood to his feet.

Phil helps push the lid all the way back as Techno leans to look inside, and there is a mess of supplies haphazardly placed around. This chest seems to be his fishing chest, considering the few fishing rods he sees sitting on top of the pile. There's hooks and jars and fishing line, and an old net somewhat folded up in the corner.

"Boring." Technoblade mutters, and Phil laughs.

"Maybe we could go catch some fish later with this." Phil suggests, reaching inside the chest and looking through it a little more. Techno just makes an unimpressed noise. "It could be fun."

"Just stab the fish." Techno leans against Phil's hip with a shrug. "That's easier."

"Not quite." Phil hums, thinking of the river nearby and the pond it leads to. That's a far walk, but he's sure Wilbur would like it. Maybe he'll take them down to it later on in the week.

He closes the lid and moves on anyhow. Techno walks away from him to the next chest, this one a bit smaller with a latch over the front of it.

"What's in here?" Techno asks, trying to undo the latch, his nails fumbling against the metal. Phil sighs fondly, and goes to help with it.

The lid creaks a bit as it's pushed up to show a collection of arrows. Phil goes still with surprise at the sight of it, and Techno makes a curious noise, trying immediately to grab one. Phil catches onto the fabric of his sleeve, lightly pulling Techno away.

"Ah, ah. Don't play with these. You could hurt yourself." Phil faintly remembers dipping quite a few of these in potions, and while he's sure the effect has worn off after all these years, he does not want Techno accidentally touching poison.

“But they’re *arrows* .” Techno whines, like it’s just the coolest thing, and Phil’s not being fair. He pulls his arm away, leaning into the chest with wide eyes. “Where’s the bow? Can you shoot them?”

“I’m not sure where my bow went.” Phil reaches down towards the arrows, pulling a few and checking them, before settling on one that looks normal enough. He pulls it completely out of the chest, lifting it in the air and checking it over before handing it to Techno. “Careful.”

“I’m not going to stab myself.” Techno says, but he then goes to tap his finger on the sharpened edge of it, and Phil clicks his tongue like a scolding. Techno pulls his hand away from the pointy bit.

“You sure about that?” Phil grins, and Techno waves the arrow through the air, looking up at Phil with a scrunched nose. “Don’t make me take that from you. You cut yourself, you’re not getting it back until we find the bow.”

“I got it.” Techno insists. He walks away from the chest, wandering through the space of the shed and turning the arrow over in his palms. He looks at it like he’s considering something. Like he’s gotten an idea.

“Do you want to learn how to use these?” Phil asks, crossing his arms over his chest.

“Kinda.” Techno shrugs, hand hovering over the pointy bit again. He doesn’t dare touch it, lest he wants Phil’s scolding click pointed at him for a second time. “I dunno. I like my sword.”

“You can do both.” Phil encourages.

“Yeah.” Techno hums, holding the arrow up like he’s comparing it against the dim shine of the sunlight. “I gotta show Wilbur this.” He declares, and he then looks back at Phil, like he’s waiting for him to lead him outside.

Phil laughs under his breath. “Alright.” He oughta go check and see what his other two boys are doing, anyhow. He closes the lid for the chest and takes Techno’s held out hand, walking them outside.

The sun is bright in the sky. The rain from the day before has passed and gone, and it leaves them only with a nice warmth over everything. There’s a gentle wind blowing through the air, rustling the leaves of the trees around them, but other than that, it’s calm. A good day for work, Phil would think, which is why he was trying to find his tools.

Unfortunately, he’s gotten distracted. He’s not so upset about it.

Him and Techno circle around the corner of the house, Phil glancing past the open front door that’s letting the breeze flow in. Skeppy and Bad had been taking measurements, last he checked. Before they build anything on this little house, they oughta make sure it's planned properly. He hopes they start fairly soon. It’d be good to be done before the fall hits too harshly.

For now, they have the summer heat beginning to wash down upon them. Techno seems to like it. Phil’s found him sunbathing out on the grass more than once, like some sort of lizard. He always looks content during those hours in the sun, although when he does have to come inside, he’s always half-asleep.

Phil thinks the warmth makes him drowsy. All Techno says is that the sun is nice and warm, before usually crawling into bed and passing out.

Wilbur’s not so inclined as to follow Techno’s habits. The boy seems to frankly hate the heat, and always takes to the shade nearby whenever Techno goes to sprawl out in the grass. Phil can’t even begin to count the amount of times Wilbur’s complained over actually melting because of the temperature outside, only for Phil to respond that no, you are not turning into juice, that’s your sweat, Wil.

Wil always disagrees. He tells Phil that he’s going to turn into a puddle one day, and Phil tells him he’ll be sure to collect him into a cup. Techno had found that hilarious.

As they walk, Techno takes the lead and starts pulling Phil into a certain direction, seeming to know exactly where his brothers are amongst all the trees and their shade. Phil looks around trying to spot them around the treeline, and he hears Wilbur before he spots him.

There's a soft singing that's echoing through the air, a song that Phil doesn't recognize. It sounds fond, full of hope and love, like a lullaby, and his footsteps falter for a second before Technoblade tugs him to keep walking.

Wilbur's not facing them as they walk up. He's sitting with his back turned against them, Tommy sitting in between his arms and legs. His singing is slow and steady against the quiet wind, and as their footsteps rustle the grass, Wil's voice tapers off. He turns around, seeing them walk up and giving a sheepish sort of smile.

"Well, aren't you a little songbird?" Phil says, Wilbur's face flushing as he gives a short laugh. He squeezes Tommy closer against his chest, and Tommy yells loudly, as if to announce his presence and make Phil look at him too.

"Hi." Wil greets, and Techno collapses down beside him as Phil kneels down to take Tommy into his arms.

"I've got something." Techno says, sitting down with the arrow held behind his back. Phil watches curiously as he holds Tommy tightly, feeling the kid grab at the front of his shirt. "It's Phil's."

"Okay..." Wilbur trails off, trying to look around Techno to see his hands. "What is it?"

Techno brings it out, holding it carefully like it might explode. Wilbur freezes.

"He has a bunch of them in the shed." Techno explains, and Wil jerks his head up. "I was thinking-" He leans forward, voice going hushed, and Phil intends to listen in, except then Tommy begins to chew on his shirt, and that catches most of his attention.

“Stop that.” Phil huffs, trying to tug Tommy off. “What are you doing?”

“Bahh.” Tommy responds rather eloquently, and Phil snorts.

“Sheep.” He says, and Tommy scrunches his nose, like he understands that. “You’re just a miniature sheep with little wings. Baaa.” He leans down and taps his forehead against Tommy’s, feeling his tiny wings flap behind him.

“Bah.” Tommy repeats, his tail whacking against Phil’s arm. “Bahhh!”

“Sheep.” Phil repeats, but it’s so, so fond.

“Dad.” Wilbur says, and Phil looks up, finding that the arrow has been moved into his hands, now. “Can I learn how to shoot a bow?”

Phil blinks. “If that’s what you want, mate.” He smiles, Techno seeming to beam with the response. It rubs off quickly on Wilbur. “We’d have to make you a bow first, though.”

“Why not just find yours?” Techno asks, tilting his head.

“That’s going to be too big.” Phil answers, turning Tommy so that he’s facing away from his chest and will stop trying to bite his shirt for attention. “I’ll have to find mine to teach you, but we’ll make your own soon. Maybe Techno can try it out too.”

“I like my sword.” Techno repeats, seeming set on that idea.

“You can do both, Tech.” Phil chuckles, Wilbur fiddling with the arrow in his hands and seeming warily curious. Just like Techno, he taps his finger onto the edge of the pointy bit. Phil clicks his tongue sharply and Wilbur immediately drops the arrow into the grass, pretending as if he never did it.

“Ah.” Tommy tries to reach a hand out to it, Phil leaning him away so he won’t be able to grab it.

“ *Nope* .” Both Wil and Techno say at the same time, frantically going to take the arrow out of range. Phil laughs, and Tommy gives an unhappy kick of his legs.

“No bows for him until he’s- he’s-” Wilbur stammers, trying to think. “Fifteen!”

“Fifty.” Techno changes, nodding wisely.

“Fifty.” Wilbur repeats, Phil snorting.

“That’s a long time.” Phil rests his chin onto Tommy’s curls. “I don’t think he’s going to want to wait that long.”

“Well, he’s gonna.” Wil scoots closer, holding out his hands and letting Tommy grab onto his fingers. “No weapons for you! Me and Techno can have the weapons. You have those teeth anyway.”

“Teeth?” Phil repeats, and he pulls Tommy away, looking closer and adjusting his mouth. Tommy whines, trying to bite his fingertips. “Oh, you’ve got little fangs!” Phil exclaims, upon seeing peeks of white coming through.

The pride in Phil’s voice is obvious, so much so that Tommy catches onto the shift of tone. He looks up at Phil with a laugh, and Phil laughs back, kissing him on the cheek.

“Little little fangs-” Phil says, kissing him again on the side of his head. Tommy screams with his hands waving wildly. “You’re a little sheep with fangs.”

“They’re pointy.” Techno throws out, like it’s important to know. He grins at Tommy making a giggle.

“They’re bitey.” Wilbur frowns, tugging at his sleeve. There’s a little bite mark on his wrist. “He tried to eat me this morning.”

“Well, that’s not good.” Phil sits Tommy down on his leg, leaning forward to look at Wilbur’s arm. It’s not terribly bad, just a little scratch, which Phil is sure he’ll heal fine from, but Tommy shouldn’t be teething on people. Especially if his teeth are going to be sharp. “We’ll find something else for him to chew on.”

“Hmm.” Techno thinks for a moment, head tilted back to the branches above them.

“He can chew on rocks.” Wil supplies, Techno looking at Wilbur like he’s just an absolute genius.

Phil sputters. “What? No.”

“Why not? I chewed on rocks! Look at my teeth.” And he opens his mouth, sticking his fingers in between his mouth as if to point specifically at the sharp ones. “V’ry sh’ap.”

“Take your hands out of your mouth, Wil.” Phil huffs. “And no more chewing rocks.”

“I don’t do it anymore.” Wilbur protests. “Mostly.”

“What does it taste like?” Techno asks, crossing his arms.

“Dirt. But cold. And also like a stone taste.”

“Stone taste?”

“Like when you lick a wall.”

“I haven’t ever licked a wall before.”

“You should.”

“No one is licking a wall.” Phil cuts them off, before they start talking about eating sand and gravel again, heavens forbid. “Come on. We’re working on the garden today.”

“Garden?” Wilbur asks, getting up as Phil stands to his feet. He helps Techno stand too. “We’re making a garden?”

“More like fixing one.” Phil shrugs one shoulder, and he adjusts Tommy in his arms, the kid once again trying to eat his shirt. “Me and Techno were looking in the shed for the tools. Come help.”

“But it’s hot.” Wilbur complains, watching Phil walk away. Techno grabs him by the hand and begins pulling him away from the shade. “I’ll die!”

“You’ll be just fine.” Phil reassures, and Wilbur whines and despairs the entire way towards the shed, Technoblade practically dragging him by the time they get there.

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They find the tools after some trial and error, with Phil having to stomp on a terrifyingly large spider, Wilbur almost getting his hand stuck in a jar, and Techno getting a face full of dust.

Phil really needs to properly clean out that shed.

After sorting the tools out in a bag that sits comfortably at his hip, he pokes his head into the house and tells Skeppy and Bad to hold the fort down until they come back. Bad had been in the middle of marking out areas in the wall when he waved them goodbye, so Phil thinks they'll be plenty busy while they're gone on a little trip. Maybe by the time they're back, Phil can begin helping with the construction planning too.

"Alright, are we ready? Got everything?" Phil asks, coming down the steps of the porch and seeing Techno wrangling Tommy in his arms. Tommy's trying earnestly to grab handfuls of Techno's hair, and Techno is leaning back as far as he can, so much so that it looks like he's going to be falling backwards into the grass. "You got him, Techno?"

"Yeah." Techno chokes out, a little strained from how he's leaned back. He adjusts Tommy in his arms, Tommy giving a squeal. "I can do it."

"Don't drop him." Phil warns light-heartedly, and Techno holds on even tighter, Tommy kicking his tiny legs.

"I got you." Techno says, but it's murmured only for Tommy's ears. Tommy reaches a hand back to grab onto Techno's hair, this time gathering a handful with success. Techno huffs over Tommy's head, deciding to let him have his way. Tommy won't be yanking it out of his scalp. Probably.

"So where did you put the garden?" Wilbur asks, looking at the forest around them, turning in circles like he's waiting for the path to reveal itself to him. "The path we came up is over there." He points to the trees across the house. "So the garden is..."

"Over here." Phil points towards the left of the house, Wilbur turning his head with wide eyes. He runs in that direction, Techno following at his heels. Phil follows with a steady walk, laughing under his breath. "I should put signs out on the paths, just to make sure you boys don't get lost." Phil says, mostly to himself as an idea.

“It’s only two paths.” Wilbur says back, his footsteps slowing when he realizes he’s leaving Phil behind. He walks to the treeline with his hands over his eyes, keeping the sun off his face. “I can remember those.”

“I have more than two paths, mate.”

Wilbur whips his head back at that, stopping in his tracks. Techno walks ahead of him, searching for an opening past the trees. “What?!”

Phil snickers. “I lived in the forest for a while, Wil. I wanted to *branch* out.” He grins, and Wilbur narrows his eyes with a deep frown, glancing up at the branches above his head.

“You’re lame, dad.” Techno drawls, but Phil can see the barely held back smile on his face. Victory.

“If you made other paths, then where did they go?” Wilbur asks, crossing his arms over his chest and walking forward as Phil catches up.

“They probably got swallowed up by the trees.” Phil shrugs, looking around. “This place grew a lot while I was gone.”

“No, where did they *lead to*? ” Wilbur corrects. “Like why did you build them?”

“I found it.” Techno calls, staring down at the ground and finding a cobbled path at his feet. It’s practically covered in grass and flowers. “You need to clean this.” He says, looking up at Phil.

“I need to clean a lot of things.” Phil sighs, Wilbur looking down at the path with interest and hopping forward like a bunny, rather than walking. He hops from stone to stone, and Phil’s heart feels warm with the silly sight. “And Wil, this path goes to the garden, like I said. The one we came up through leads out of the forest. I have another that leads towards the river-”

Wilbur almost trips on his next jump, stumbling over a root in his way. He looks over his shoulder at Phil. “You have a river?” He asks, eyes wide open with surprise. “And you didn’t tell me!”

“I’ll take you there soon.” Phil reassures.

“You saw me melting! The sun was killing me and you didn’t think to tell me we have an amazing river nearby!?” Wilbur stomps his feet onto the path underneath him, pointing a clawed finger at Phil. “Traitor!”

Phil only laughs. “You’re not going to die from a bit of sun, Wil. We can go over there tomorrow morning, yeah? You can swim before the afternoon hits.”

Wilbur’s fins on his head seem to perk up with the promise of that. He hums, the very sound nearly vibrating through the air like an echo out of a cave. Phil tilts his head, blinking a bit. “Okay. But you’re coming in the water with me.” Wilbur says, his lips tugging into a smile.

“Sure, mate.”

“And you too!” Wilbur hops over to Techno, lowering his head to the baby in his arms. “You should learn how to swim, Tommy. Like a fish. A little little fish.”

“Abababah.” Tommy responds, Wilbur nodding like it’s an agreement.

“Yes, absolutely. We’re going swimming tomorrow.”

“Hmm.” Techno groans a bit, looking hesitant. “What if it’s cold?”

“Then you be cold.” Wilbur responds ruthlessly.

“You can sit by the edge of the river, Tech. You won’t be far.” Phil suggests, and Techno’s worries are quelled by that. “Maybe you can find a nice spot of sun to sit in.”

“Lizard.” Wilbur mutters, but it’s nothing cruel. Just a tease. “Lizard brother.”

“I’m a piglin.” Techno corrects.

“Lizard.” Wilbur circles in front of Techno, walking backwards so he can face him. “I used to always see lizards sitting in the sun. And where do I always see you? In the sun too. Therefore, lizard.”

“If I’m a lizard, then Tommy’s a lizard too.” Techno protests, lifting up the baby as if to prove his point. “He’s got a tail and everything.”

“Oh no.” Wilbur groans, holding his hands to his face. “I have lizard brothers. I don’t *want* lizard brothers.” Phil laughs at the pure despair in his tone.

“Join us, join us...” Techno coaxes, holding out Tommy like a form of persuasion. “You have scales already. You can be a blue lizard.”

“I don’t want to be a lizard!” Wilbur yells, running to Phil. “Dad, tell him I’m not a lizard!” He pleads, slamming into Phil’s side and digging his hands into the fabric of his shirt. Phil rests a hand over his curls.

“You called him a lizard first, Wil.” Phil points out, and Wilbur gives a dramatic crying wail. Tommy copies it not a second later.

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The garden is about as rough as Phil thought it'd be.

It's entirely overgrown, more like a jungle of vines and leaves rather than a garden, now. There's no sense of organization, only plants crossing over each other and hiding away the path that was carved out so long ago. Phil faintly remembers having fences here. They are no longer visible.

Wilbur and Techno immediately head to explore, hand held tightly together as they climb over the greenery to see if there's anything of interest. The sun shines down on them both as they run and step carefully, and Phil calls out to them before they get too far.

"Don't run out of sight!" He warns, and they give a vague noise of agreement, Techno cackling when Wilbur trips over a root and crashes into a pile of leaves. "And be careful of bugs." Wilbur shrieks.

Tommy, who's held securely in Phil's arms, a clawed finger stuck into his mouth, looks interested at all the new scenery. He stares at Wil and Techno getting caught up in their own shenanigans, and then turns to Phil, blinking up at him until Phil looks back down.

"Bah." Tommy says, and Phil huffs, raising a hand to pull Tommy's finger out of his own teeth.

"Sheep." He says, before pausing. "A little sheep. More like a lamb, really."

"Mhmm." Tommy rests his head against the curve of Phil's neck, grabbing onto the collar of his shirt.

"You're a lamb." Phil decides, nodding to himself before placing a kiss onto Tommy's forehead. Tommy gives an annoyed noise. "A lamb with dragon wings."

"Buh."

“Baaa.” Phil walks forward, stepping carefully through the mess of growth in an effort to find a place to start. “That’s how lambs sound. Baa.”

“Bahh.”

“Exactly.” Phil nods, grinning wide. “That’s you.” He looks around, trying to recall the layout of this place, how exactly he had sorted it all out. He knows he was rather neat, before. It’s hard to even tell he put years of work into this place, now.

He pushes aside a bush when his foot grazes against something solid, and he finds a peek of wood. Upon closer inspection and kicking the leaves away, he finds a tree trunk, with the top being smoothed out as if it was once used as a little table. There’s a pair of rusted shears sitting in view.

He blinks. Picking them up, he lifts it into the sun to see it properly, and feels a slight sense of nostalgia with it. How many times had he used these? How many times did he walk around with these in his pocket, still busy with projects, busy with needing to distract himself? That was so long. Back then, when he was just a lonely avian in the woods, building a quiet little life. Back then, when he was not yet aware of the hopeful future that was on his path.

Phil glances at Wilbur and Techno, finding their heads barely poking out from a mess of leaves, the two of them digging through the dirt, no doubt looking for bugs. Part of him knows he’s going to have to go make sure they’re not eating any. Part of him feels so glad at seeing them there, buried in the remnants of a place he once loved.

Well. He still loves it. Even if it’s not nearly as pretty anymore.

“We’ve got lots of work ahead of us.” Phil murmurs, dropping the shears onto the ground beside the tree trunk.

“Ahh!” Tommy screams, his wings flapping enthusiastically upon seeing a bird fly over their heads. Phil watches it go, and laughs with the sight.

“Birdy.” He says, just for something to say. He puts Tommy down on the tree trunk, letting the kid sit up on his own. “Here. Stay right there, don’t fall.”

Tommy’s tail flicks back and forth through the air, whacking against the old wood behind him. He looks around him at the drop off the trunk, like he’s considering crawling off to fall into the leaves. Phil holds a wary hand out as he pulls off his bag, quickly searching for his axe.

With the years that have passed with his tools being put away, Phil had assumed at first that everything of use would be rusted by now, too old or corroded to be of any use. Fortunately, though, past-Phil had made mostly everything with the intention of having it last for a long, long while. Such is the mindset of someone practically immortal.

Phil’s axe has dust dug into the crevices of its handle, but there’s not a speck of rust on its blade. There’s no cracks, no worn down edges. Only a faint, slight shimmer of an enchantment, and a tiny scratched out word in the metal of a language that’s since been lost to time.

Phil brushes his palm over the side of the axe, trying to wipe away the feeling of dirt. This isn’t the most convenient thing to use, honestly, but it’s what he’s got. He’s not feeling up to cleaning that old shed, anyway.

He looks back up at Tommy, finding him leaning dangerously close to the edge of the tree trunk, looking enraptured by everything in the dirt below. Phil quickly goes to pick him up, resting him against his hip.

“You’re just a curious little lamb, aren’t you?” Phil asks, and Tommy doesn’t take his eyes off from the ground. He reaches a hand out towards their feet, trying to get to it. “I should’ve brought something to keep you held against me. Or at least a toy.”

Tommy doesn’t seem all that bummed by it. Phil hums.

“Alright, alright.” He puts Tommy down, watching as Tommy immediately digs his small hands into the dirt, screaming with delight. “I’m going to have to give you a bath after this.” Phil smiles, and Tommy pays him no mind, looking as if he will now put all his existing energy into digging a hole.

Phil works on clearing out the area around him for the time being. He cuts away at any overgrowth around him, making an open spot around him and Tommy. Tugging out the plants, root and all, he reveals the soft dirt underneath, and with it, the traces of life that comes with the wild.

There’s bugs and ants and beetles, and even what looks to be a little mouse underneath the leaves Phil pulls aside. Phil looks on with curiosity, shooing them off when they don’t move. Although, more often than not, they all go running the second Phil moves anything. Skittish little things.

His sleeves keep falling around his wrists as he works, so he folds them past his elbows and ignores the way he’s left a bit of dirt stained onto the fabric. Everything can wash out, eventually, he tells himself. However, he supposes he could’ve came here a bit more well prepared. He’s not properly dressed for this.

He blames his impatience. He really had just wanted to see how it was, after all this time, and how his kids would like it. Can’t blame a guy for wanting to know how his children would settle into a place that used to be his life for so long.

So far from what he’s seeing, Tommy’s having the time of his life within the piles of dug out dirt, and Techno and Wilbur are exploring around the garden holding sticks like they’re swords. He thinks he can hear them talking about royal titles and knight oaths. It sounds like their usual sort of game, the ones they always played while traveling on the way here, and the familiarity makes Phil’s heart squeeze. He smiles with the background noise of them playing.

He tears out vines and branches and bushes and throws them off to the side, where he knows his garden doesn’t reach. He clears away the overabundance of out of control plants, and wonders if he’ll be able to salvage any of this. Part of him knows he could. Part of him just wants to start all over again, like a blank slate. Maybe he could try sneaking down to the town, gathering some seeds from there. It’s what he did before, but then again, before he wasn’t quite this sought after.

Maybe he'll send Skeppy instead. That man has better luck with the townspeople, and Phil can't risk being seen. He'll wait a good decade before even thinking about heading out again, and when the time does come, he knows he'll be hidden properly by then.

His axe seems to glow the more he puts it to use, and by the time a good hour has passed, with the sun warm on his skin, and his palms covered in dirt, the tool is practically humming in his hands. Just barely, like a soft whisper in the wind. Phil holds the thing up to his ear, intrigued, but even with being closer, he doesn't hear anything more.

Strange.

Magic is a strong thing, but he doesn't recall his tools ever actually humming. Maybe his memory isn't serving him well. Maybe they did that all along, and Phil didn't notice. However...

There's a loud crash and shriek from behind him and Phil whips his head up, already half-way on his feet before he's even called.

"Dad!" Techno yells, Wilbur groaning loudly in pain. "Dad!"

"Coming!" Phil says, quickly making his way over. He leaves Tommy where he is, knowing full well he'll be fine just a couple feet away. "What happened?! Are you alright?"

"Wilbur's not." Techno says, voice sounding slightly shaky. Phil finds them in the mess of growth, Wilbur sprawled out on the ground with pieces of broken fence underneath him.

Ah, so that's where his fence went. Hidden underneath the leaves.

"I'm okay." Wil's voice wavers out, and he pushes himself up into a sitting position, his hand reaching down to his leg. There's a piece of wood stuck into it, courtesy of the broken fence

he just crashed into. Phil steps over a root in his way and immediately goes to kneel down in front of him.

“It just- I fell.” Wilbur explains, staring wide-eyed at the injury. Phil holds onto lightly to his ankle, as if telling him to not move. “Huh.”

“Don’t touch it.” Phil says lightly, trying to not let himself sound as panicked as he feels. He looks over his shoulder. “Techno, go get Tommy for me? He’s out playing in the dirt.”

“Kay.” Techno nods, staring at Wilbur for a few more worried seconds before quickly moving to do just that.

“I’m fine.” Wilbur insists, ignoring Phil’s advice and tugging at the broken piece of wood with a wince. “It’s just- It’s tiny.” Compared to everything else that’s ever stabbed itself into Wilbur’s leg, this is like a splinter. Just a stray accident.

“Wilbur.” Phil warns, but Wil yanks it out before Phil can stop him, and he throws it to the side right after. The wound begins to bleed a bit more freely, and Wil covers it with his palm.

“All better.” Wilbur says, like he’s trying to convince them both. He looks up at Phil. “It’ll stop bleeding. In a bit.” He tilts his chin up towards the clouds, like he’s trying to ignore the injury and the blood against his skin.

Phil clicks his tongue. Wilbur frowns.

“You can go back to gardening.” Wil offers, a bit of a nervous tilt in his words. As if Phil will be angry with him for being hurt. Phil doesn’t know why he would ever think that, but he supposes that injury and blood has always had a negative connotation for Wil.

Injuries always meant hunters. Wounds always meant being slowed down, meant being caught. Phil’s heart aches.

“The plants aren’t going anywhere.” Phil reassures, voice soft. “Come here.” Phil reaches out, taking Wil’s arm and tugging him forward. Wil looks down at him with surprise, and Phil wraps an arm around Wil’s waist, pulling him out of the small wreckage he’s made. “Up, up, come on.”

Wilbur stumbles to quickly stand on his feet, but he’s not standing for much more than a second before Phil picks him up off the ground entirely. He flails with the sudden move, throwing his arms around Phil’s neck to be secure.

“Careful with the leg.” Phil warns, carrying Wil with an arm around his middle and an arm underneath his knees. He looks down at Wilbur’s leg, and sees blood slowly finding its way down to his ankle.

“It’s fine.” Wilbur repeats, readjusting his grip so that he’s not digging his claws into Phil’s shoulders and rather just holding on. “It only hurts a little.”

“Aren’t you brave.” Phil responds, and Wilbur blinks at him like he doesn’t know what to make of that. “Brave and strong.”

“...huh?”

Phil laughs, Wilbur chuckling a bit in return. It’s more confused if anything.

“Alright, songbird,” Phil says, turning around and taking Wilbur away from the broken fence. “Let’s go patch you up.”

“But it doesn’t hurt that bad.” Wil points out. “I can- I can walk.”

“I want to carry you.” Phil responds, and Wilbur’s fingers dig into his shirt. “And we should still clean it up anyhow. It won’t take long, and we can come right back here once done.” He

adjusts Wilbur in his grip, and makes his way across the garden, spotting Techno by the overgrown path, with Tommy in his arms. The little one is entirely covered in dirt, and some of it has rubbed onto Techno, a smear of dirt on his cheek. Phil wants to clean it off with his sleeve, but he knows that's covered in dirt too.

"Is he okay?" Techno asks, seeming worried by the fact Wil's being carried rather than walking.

"Just a little scratch." Phil reassures, nodding his head for Techno to follow. "We'll go fix it up at the house."

Wilbur kicks his leg a bit, peeking over Phil's shoulder to look at Techno. Techno stares back, making a tiny smile.

"Do we have to clean it?" Wilbur asks, still seeming a little confused. "I can just wipe it off." He tries to reach a hand out to his leg, and Phil gently pulls it back.

"You could. But then you'll get dirt in it, and that wouldn't be comfortable."

It wouldn't be, that's true. Wilbur knows what it's like to have dirt in his wounds. "It'll still heal." He mutters.

"I want it to heal clean. With a bandage and everything." Phil's chin grazes over Wil's head for a second, and Wilbur tilts his head up with a scrunched nose.

He stares at the trees for a bit, listening to their footsteps against the forest floor, and the sound of the birds chirping off in the branches. Tommy's babbling away at Techno, Techno giving murmured responses that don't mean all that much. It's a calm mood, which means they should be acting calm. But instead Phil's carrying him off to get healed, as if Wilbur's going to die, or something.

“This feels unnecessary.” Wilbur says underneath his breath, the words hardly a whisper. Phil hears it perfectly with how close he is.

“We’re all home.” Phil answers, and Wil pauses with the kiss getting pressed against the side of his head. “There’s no more hunters, no more running. Which means I get to spoil you a bit.”

Wil jerks his head up, blinking slowly. Phil looks back at him with a smile.

“So that means bandages for tiny bleeding wounds.” He declares, like it’s now law, and Wilbur’s going to have to follow it. A part of Wilbur wants to laugh. But.

He blinks again, pressing his lips tightly together as if to keep any words from spilling out. His eyes burn, and Phil’s smile falters, then grows a little blurry. There’s something in Wilbur’s eyes. He blinks to get it out, and then finds tears running down his face.

“Oh.” Wilbur says, for a realization that he’s crying, and a realization that home means-

It really does mean safety. It means love and it means a happy life of being care-free, and Wilbur knew that. He knew that! He knew he was going to be okay, with Phil and Techno and Tommy at his side. But actually having it, actually living it, it’s so much more. He-

“Shh.” Phil rests his hand over Wil’s back as Wilbur turns to hide his face into his shoulder, giving a quiet sob. “You’re okay.”

He slows his steps as the house comes into view, and he turns his head over to Techno.

“Technoblade, go tell Bad to find the medkit. Should be somewhere in the kitchen, I hope. We’ll be right there.”

Techno frowns at the sight of Wilbur, but he nods, and heads off quickly with Tommy in his arms, making a beeline towards the front door. Phil watches him go, rubbing a hand over Wil's spine and hearing him cry just beside his ear.

"It's alright." Phil murmurs, Wilbur's breath hitching as he sobs again. "You're very brave, you know that?"

Wilbur wipes his face into Phil's shoulder, sniffing loudly.

"Took that splinter out without even flinching. Next time, I'd rather you wait for me to do it, but you did good." Phil runs his fingers up through the back of Wilbur's curls, lightly pulling out a few tangles. "You did so good."

Wilbur cries, squeezing his arms around Phil with a pathetic noise, and Phil squeezes back, wrapping one wing forward and hiding his upper half underneath the feathers for a moment. They stand there in the shade, by the treeline, Phil holding him close until Wilbur calms down enough to breathe.

By the time he's finished sobbing, Bad is running out from the front porch, Skeppy hovering by the front door with Tommy in his arms. Techno's standing right behind him, hiding behind his legs.

"Is he alright?" Bad calls, Phil walking his way over to meet him midway. "Techno said he got hurt while you guys were in the garden."

"He fell into one of my old fences. Everything's kinda hidden away by the growth, so he didn't see it and crashed right into it." Phil answers, stopping in front of Bad so he can take his look at Wil. "Got stabbed right in the leg."

"Oh dear!" Bad exclaims, Wilbur turning his head and peeking out towards the demon. "That must've hurt. You feeling okay, Wil?"

Wilbur sniffs, eyes flicking down at his leg. “Yeah.”

“Well, that’s good.” He leans down to look at Wilbur’s leg. “It doesn’t seem too bad, so I think you’ll heal up just fine.” He smiles, looking unreasonably soft for someone with such an intimidating appearance.

Phil smiles. “That’s the plan. Did you find the medkit?” He asks, walking past Bad to head into the house.

“It was in one of the cabinets. It’s pretty old, but everything was properly stored away in the box, so Skeppy just rinsed the dust off.”

Phil hums, stepping through the front door and heading straight for the kitchen, walking down the hall. Techno follows at his heels, his hand lightly grabbing onto the back of his feathers.

“We didn’t see the fence.” Techno says, trying to explain. “We were just running, and-”

“It’s okay.” Phil reassures, putting Wilbur down on the counter and kissing him once on the forehead before moving his attention to getting a towel so that he could wash the blood off. “I should’ve warned you beforehand so you’d be careful. Lesson learned. You guys will be more cautious when playing in the garden, yeah?”

Both Techno and Wilbur nod, Wilbur wiping his sleeve against his face.

“Yeah.” Phil nods with them, and wets the towel he’s found by the sink, standing in front of Wilbur and lifting his leg up by the ankle. “Let’s see the damage here.” He carefully pushes Wilbur’s pants up, wiping off the blood that’s run down to above his shoe. He cleans away whatever dirt and blood he finds, and as he keeps going up, he realizes he’s not finding anything.

He pauses.

“Wilbur...where did you get hurt?” Phil asks slowly.

Wilbur frowns, his eyebrows scrunching against each other. “On my leg.”

“Point it out for me.”

Wil leans forward on the counter, tugging at his pants and going to point where his injury is supposed to be, but then he stops, and he stares at his leg, looking confused. “It was- It was right here.” He points at a specific spot.

Phil wipes over it carefully, and after a moment, he finds nothing underneath. He pokes a bit at the skin, looks closer, and faintly, very faintly, he can see a small mark. Like a perfectly healed scab.

But just as soon as he sees it, it’s gone. Faded in with the rest of Wil’s skin.

Phil leans back. “Well.” He says, looking up at Wilbur. “That’s curious.”

## Chapter End Notes

hehehehehehehehe

ahem. Hello, my change fate enjoyers! The king returns! And by that I mean I have been hit with the change fate brainrot so BUCKLE UP. we have family fluff on the horizon and OHOHOOHO I love it. Love to see it.

Thank you oh so much for your patience and thank you so much for reading. Leave a comment, it'll fuel me and get that chapter out faster, and have a nice day.

# Bug jail

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“What?” Wilbur asks, staring at Phil with a near frown. “What’s wrong?” He asks, glancing down at where an injury *should* be.

Techno moves forward to take a look for himself, forcing himself a spot beside Phil so that he may grab at Wil’s leg and see the damage properly. Or lack of damage, really. Wilbur looks down at him nervously, and Techno pokes an insistent finger at his skin in return, like that’s going to reveal all its secrets. Wil jerks back with a puff of air coming from his lungs, almost like a laugh. He tries to swing his foot at Techno.

“Nothing’s wrong, Wil.” Phil reassures, squeezing his hand around Wilbur’s ankle for a second, before then trying to swat off Techno from persistently prodding at his brother. Techno makes a grumbled noise, but he complies, leaning into Phil’s side and glaring at Wilbur’s leg like he’s threatening it to not make any problems.

Phil reaches up behind him and messes with his hair to get rid of the menacing look. Technoblade only whines and pulls away, trying to hide into Phil’s wings so that he’s out of reach.

“You said ‘*That’s curious.*’ So something’s wrong.” Wilbur insists, pulling his leg up onto the counter and tugging at his pant leg to try and get a look for himself. As he pats his palms up and down to try and find the wound, he realizes he’s coming up with nothing. “Wait, where’d it go?”

Skeppy walks into the kitchen then, with a kid on his hip that’s earnestly trying to grab at the diamonds scattered over his face. He keeps leaning away from Tommy’s hands in a way that looks like it’ll be pain for his neck later on.

“What’s the damage, then?” Skeppy asks, pausing in place at the pinched look on Phil’s face. “Is it bad?”

“Where’d it go!?” Wilbur yells out, kicking off his shoes in an useless effort to search more efficiently. They narrowly miss Phil’s leg as they land onto the floor, and Phil faintly wonders if that was just an excuse to be rid of his shoes.

“It’s gone.” Phil answers, to both Wilbur and Skeppy. “You’re not going to find anything, Wil.”

“But it was right here...” Wilbur protests, rubbing at the same spot where he had gotten stabbed. “It was- You saw it!” He looks up at Phil, as if worried he won’t believe him. Phil’s expression must be trustworthy, though, because as soon as Wil locks eyes with him, his worry fades away, only leaving pure confusion in its place.

“Wait, what do you mean it’s gone?” Skeppy asks, coming closer as Phil stands to his feet. Technoblade, now without feathers to hide behind, decides to go up to the counter instead so that he can look at Wilbur over the edge. He stands on his toes to get the best view. “It’s healed? Entirely?”

“There’s not even a scab...” Phil mutters, taking Wilbur’s leg again and finding nothing but unblemished skin. Not even a single mark to be found. “It had been bleeding when we were walking over here, but now it’s not-” He stammers, waving a hand.

“Did *you* heal him?” Skeppy asks, leaning closer and glancing at the necklace that sits around Phil’s neck. “Or did he do it himself?” He suggests, ignoring the way Tommy’s trying to gnaw on his shoulder.

“I don’t *have* healing.” Wilbur denies. “I would’ve known if I did. It would’ve come in handy.” He mutters, thinking of all the other times he’s had to deal with injuries while on his own.

“And I didn’t do this.” Phil adds, turning his head towards Skeppy. “I’ve never healed anyone before. My necklace- it only tends to my own wounds.”

“Huh.” Skeppy says, adjusting Tommy a bit against his side. He looks dumbfounded. Phil feels the same. “BAAAD!”

Phil hears a tiny snort from Techno at the way Skeppy yells Bad’s name, and Phil smiles quietly as he turns his head towards the hall. For some reason, he expects to hear Bad before he sees him. He expects loud footsteps coming down the hall, stomping against the floorboards, but Bad is a quiet sort of person when he wants to be, so he doesn’t make much noise as he comes into the kitchen.

“What?” Bad asks, a hint of good-natured annoyance mixed behind his tone. There’s still a fond look on his face even with it.

Skeppy only hums, tilting his head towards Wilbur on the counter. “Do you think Wil has healing?”

Bad blinks. “Did he heal?” He questions, walking closer with new interest. “On his own?”

“Looks like it.” Skeppy shrugs, and Phil steps to the side to let Bad look at Wil. Wilbur seems a little exasperated that everyone keeps needing to look at his non-injury, but mostly, he’s just confused.

A moment passes as Bad goes through the same process as Phil, checking for the injury, only to find nothing left behind. He goes an extra mile and makes sure Wil can move his foot correctly and has no pain, and when everything appears to be in place, he just steps back with his hands on his hips and goes- “Huh.”

“So... do I still get a bandage?” Wilbur asks, clearly letting them all know where his priorities lie.

“Do you want one?” Phil asks, grinning towards Wil with something like soft amusement.

Wilbur swings his feet and gently hits his heels against the wood of the cabinets, narrowing his eyes with a bit of hesitation. “....maybe.” He admits, and Phil laughs. He goes to get a bandage for Wil’s non-existent wound.

“Wilbur, have you ever healed unnaturally quickly before?” Bad asks, tapping a finger onto his leg.

Wilbur hums, trying to think. A frown pulls at his lips with the memories. In all his extensive experience he’s had in being injured, try as he might, he can’t recall ever healing quite so quickly like this.

As far as he knows, wounds and cuts have always been something annoying, something lasting. They would take forever to go away, and it would always sting whenever he was running through the woods, or in a net, or in a cage.

He shrinks down in the spot he’s sitting, shaking his head in response to Bad’s question. “I don’t have healing.” He insists. He would’ve known. Or he would’ve used it by now, surely. Surely.

Bad makes a thoughtful noise, not noticing the way Wilbur stares into his palms sitting on his lap.

“Maybe he didn’t have it before.” Skeppy offers, waving a hand through the air. “Could be a whole-- developmental thing.”

“We have seen things like that before.” Bad notes, turning his head to Phil, and Phil remembers that those two had indeed had a history of taking in monsters regularly. They must’ve seen a lot in those passing years. “Healing is a *rare* thing, though.”

“Aren’t these kids apocalypse bringers? I’d expect them to have a bit of rare abilities.” Skeppy points out, trying to put down Tommy so he’ll stop making attempts at biting off the diamonds on his skin. Tommy kicks his legs with a whine, but he’s put down on the floor anyway despite his protests. Once there, he decides to make a run for it, crawling away to freedom. Techno scoops him up before he can get too far.

“That’s true.” Bad agrees with Skeppy. “We have no idea how they’re going to turn out, huh?”

“Unless you got any idea, Phil?” Skeppy asks, and Phil shakes his head. “Then we’re just going to assume they’ll grow big and strong.” He makes a flexing motion towards Wil, and Wilbur blinks at him, before sticking out his tongue in a mocking manner. Skeppy sputters in offense.

Phil feels a weird sort of pride with that fact in the air. These are his kids, and while they’re so endearingly *small* right now, they’re supposedly destined to be apocalypse bringers. A fate like that, regardless of if it’ll be carried out or not, is going to bring some daunting results.

Somehow, the idea of them being so devastatingly powerful only feels like a positive to him, even with the threat of it all going wrong. Maybe it’s because then no one in the world would ever be able to hurt them again.

All he wants at this point is for no one to ever hurt his children again.

“Well,” Phil brushes off those passing thoughts, taking hold of Wilbur’s leg once more. “If he *does* have healing, then, why now? You think it’s an age thing?”

He smooths out a band-aid onto where he thinks Wil’s wound used to be, perfectly gentle as if the injury is still there. When he lets go, Wilbur looks down at it with a beaming smile, like Phil’s given him a medal. Phil smiles back, then helps him down from the countertop.

“That, or stress.” Bad says, and when Wilbur has both feet on the ground, he leans against Phil’s leg, using it as a support to keep his balance. Phil can feel the tiny pinpricks of Wil’s claws in the back of his knee. “We’re not on the move anymore. We’re as safe as one can be, in their unique sort of situation. So, maybe he’s actually rested enough to let his body heal?”

“Like with the necklace.” Techno points out. Phil looks down towards him, almost laughing at the sight of Techo practically smothering Tommy in his arms. Tommy doesn’t seem

unhappy by it. If anything, he looks like he's taking a nap, curled up into the curve of Techno's neck. "You said you need to sleep for your necklace to help you."

"But I've been sleeping!" Wilbur declares. "I've been doing really good sleeping, and this only just showed up!" Ever since staying with Phil-- Wilbur doesn't think he's ever slept this well in his whole life. First it was the forest, with Techno at his side, then he got to sleep underneath Phil's wings, and now they're in their own house, with that comfy bed. It only gets better and better.

Maybe next, they can sleep in the river. Now that would be nice. Although he has a feeling Techno wouldn't want to sleep with soaked clothes.

"Then it's an age thing." Skeppy decides, seeming set on that. "Congratulations, kid, you've hit the milestone." He claps half-heartedly. Bad claps with him, more enthusiastically. Wilbur just faceplants into Phil's hip.

"How do we know it was actually him, though?" Technoblade asks, lifting his chin up high. Wilbur peeks out from Phil's leg. "I mean, we don't actually know if he has healing. I think dad just accidentally rubbed it off on him."

Phil holds back a snort. "What do you think we should do, then?" He asks, and Technoblade stares at Wilbur with consideration.

"We can test it."

Phil tilts his head. He can feel Wilbur's claws dig a little further into his leg, just for a moment. It lightens up right after.

"Test it how?" He pushes, voice slow with an almost warming at the edge of it. "We're not hurting him."

Techno huffs. "I'm not saying to *stab* him. Just like- give him a paper cut."

Wilbur scrunches his nose with annoyance. “ *You* get a paper cut. Then we both see if we have healing.”

“Fine.” Techno agrees easily, and Wilbur blinks in surprise. He hadn’t thought Techno would agree that quickly. He then frowns. Well, if his brother’s doing it, now he’s *got* to do it.

“You don’t have to.” Phil reminds. “We can just go back to the garden, you two.”

“Nope.” Techno refuses, resting his cheek onto the top of Tommy’s head. “We have to see.”

“You just want to find out if you have healing powers too.” Wilbur accuses.

“Yeah.” Techno confesses, once again, quick and easy. Wilbur fumes at him. “It’d be cool.”

“Fine!” Wilbur says. “Phil, give me a paper cut.”

Phil sighs down at his son. He’d give anything for these kids, really. But also his dad instincts are not agreeing with any of this. Techno has a point, a paper cut won’t kill them, but Phil is tempted to insist to them both that they don’t *have* to do it, they don’t *have* to test anything, and they can just go back to the garden. Paper cuts are evil anyway.

He endures through it. Phil is strong, he can deal with giving his two sons tiny little paper cuts. It’s just to test their healing. To see if they’ll be safe if they get hurt. Yeah. That’s a good thing.

Somehow, that doesn’t calm his thoughts as much as he thought it would. If anything he feels more apprehensive than before.

“Okay, okay.” Phil says, mostly to himself as he picks Wilbur up from the ground to put him back on the counter. Techno passes Tommy over to Bad, and soon enough he joins Wilbur’s side on the counter as well. Phil walks out from the kitchen for a second to search for his usual dagger. He doesn’t trust anything of the blades in the kitchen, even if they used to be his own so long ago.

He finds the dagger in his room, sitting innocently on top of his desk. As he takes it and pulls the sheath off, he finds a heavy weight in his heart at thinking what Wilbur’s possible healing could mean.

It reminds him too much of the magic that’s resting around his neck. Gods, Kristin had worked so hard on this, he remembers it. She was always one to be in tune with enchantments, out of the two of them. Phil loved building, mostly. Carving and such. She was one for the books. For spells and magic and languages that Phil only hears whispers of, now.

Wilbur might have that sort of magic naturally. Just as he is. No outside influence needed, no lessons that have to be taught, he might just-- have it.

They *all* could have that type of magic. Powers and enchantments that most men would spend years trying to achieve. He wonders what Kristin would think of that.

He thinks she’d be fascinated. Held in wonder, just by the sight of his kids. They’re worth that reaction, to be fair.

Phil huffs, turning back and returning to the kitchen with quick steps. He makes a note in the back of his head to visit Kristin’s grave later on today. He has to fix up the area there.

Wilbur and Techno are waiting patiently for him on the counter, and Wilbur sticks his finger out at Phil the second he sees him walk in. Techno copies him not a moment later, and Phil gives them both a kind smile.

He takes Wilbur’s hand first, holding it carefully still so that he can be precise. With just one quick swipe, he gives the tiniest cut he can manage onto the back of his finger. He does the

same to Techno right after. They both intently stare at their new injuries with a focus that's nearly impressive.

Phil wipes off the knife with a towel, even if it's not really needed. He just needs something to fiddle with, mostly. He glances at Tommy sleeping against Bad's chest, and his heart grows warm at the sight of him snoozing away without a single worry. He looks so, so terribly *tiny* in Bad's arms, considering how much bigger Bad is than the rest of them. It makes Phil want to cry a little. One of these days, he thinks he will.

"Look!" Wilbur exclaims suddenly, elbowing Techno to get his attention, even though Technoblade is already right beside him. He holds out his finger and stares at it intensely, and Techno lifts his finger next to his so they can compare.

Phil quickly leans in with interest, then reels back with shock as he watches Wilbur's cut just-- disappear.

It almost looks as if its sewing itself back up, a direct reverse of what Phil did just a moment ago. It fixes itself up into a little scab, then that scab fades away within just a few seconds, Wilbur making a noise of awe. Within a single minute, his finger is perfectly unharmed. It's like Phil's blade never did anything at all.

Techno's finger, however, still stays injured. Wilbur stares at it with a growing frown, his excitement quickly wearing off when he realizes Technoblade isn't healing like him.

"Dang." Techno says, upon seeing his finger stay the way it is. He doesn't sound too disappointed. Mostly just unimpressed. He looks at Wilbur's finger with a grin. "That's cool."

Wilbur beams once more. "Yeah." He chuckles, and then jabs Techno in the side. Technoblade yells from the sudden attack.

"Ow!"

“Maybe I can rub it off on you!”

“By jabbing my guts out-? Ow! Dad!” He lifts his foot up and begins kicking at Wilbur, Wil screaming as he nearly gets knocked off the counter.

“Wilbur, Wil- Techno! Boys.” Phil quickly stops them both, grabbing at their wrists. “Let me see.”

They obediently show him their fingers, pausing in their play fighting for a second. Once Phil has confirmation in what he’s seeing, he lets go, humming in the back of his throat.

“Well.” He says, feeling a quiet sense of pride in his chest. “That settles that, then.” He looks to Bad and Skeppy, Bad seeming happy for him. Skeppy just looks vaguely smug.

“I need a bandage.” Technoblade announces, holding his finger up at Phil, as if needing to remind him that he is oh so gravely injured.

“I want one too.” Wilbur nods, raising his hand as well. “Can I have one?” He adds on, his words faltering as if he’s not sure if he can have it. Phil had said he could, but he doesn’t know if that was a blanket statement.

“Yes, you can have one.” Phil agrees, turning back to the medkit that still sits open by the sink.

He tends to both their wounds, healed and not.

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They return back to the garden soon after.

With Tommy having fallen asleep, Bad at first suggests that the kid can stay at the house to sleep better in the bedroom, with him and Skeppy keeping watch. With Phil's hesitation at that, he changes his suggestion, and instead offers that Phil try wrapping Tommy up so that he can be carried against his chest.

Phil ends up doing that. Surprisingly, in the whole process of wrapping Tommy up in cloth, he doesn't stir one bit. He does, however, somehow try to bite Phil in his sleep.

They've really oughta find something for him to chew on.

With one baby secured, and two paper cuts wrapped up, they go back on the overgrown path to the garden, resuming where they left off.

Phil reminds Wilbur and Techno to be careful of where they play, and they both agree to not go running around wildly until all the vines are cleared away. They instead go and try to find bugs hidden away in the leaves. Sounds like a fine hobby in Phil's opinion. As long as they're not eating said bugs.

His axe is still right where he put it, so he picks it up from the ground and resumes his work on cleaning up the garden, getting rid of all the overgrowth. He does it with a bit more of a ferocity than he had before. Maybe he has a grudge against the plants for tripping his son. Who knows. He'll never tell, and besides-- it's clearly making him more productive.

The sun is warm on his back as he keeps on cutting away. He ends up running into an old fence, and he finds the dirty path that he had once paved out through all the sections of his crops. It's too much work to clean all the dirt off from the stone, so he just keeps his focus on the plants, and tells himself he'll scrub it down later.

For a moment, he stops in his work and pushes a hand against the fence he's uncovered. It creaks and groans with the slight push, complaining over the effects of time and how it has made it frail. Phil considers for a second on tearing the fence down, but that decision is then taken out of his hands when said fence seems to think enough is enough and it falls over with a quiet snap. Phil snorts as watches it descend into a bed of leaves and he goes to pick up its remains so that no one will be stumbling over the splinters left behind.

With that, he begins tearing down whatever fence he finds. It's not a hard task, considering how weak the wood is now, having been worn down from the weather and the wildlife. As he uses his axe consistently, he waits for the same humming from before to return. It's a passing thought, not of much importance, but he wants to hear it again. Just to figure out what it was.

Unfortunately, as two warm hours pass, he gets no results. His axe stays stubbornly quiet and functions just as it should. Phil feels a hint of disappointment with it, but he brushes it off pretty easily.

He goes to check on Wilbur and Techno, wondering how their mission of finding bugs has been going. It takes a second to spot them amongst the mess of plants, (he's been clearing them away for the better part of the day, and yet he hasn't made that much of a mark, pity) but he finds them crouched down in a little open section they must've made themselves.

"How is your bug-catching coming along?" Phil asks, making his way over and seeing both their heads whip up to look at him.

"Look, dad!" Wilbur smiles with a big grin, holding up what looks to be a centipede. Techno points at it, as if Phil needs direction on where his eyes have to be. "Mr. Leg man." Wil says, almost like an introduction. Phil tilts his head with a little laugh.

"He's got legs for dayyys." Techno says, nodding towards the bug, and Wilbur nods with him. "He's kinda slow, though."

"I would think so." Phil humors them, kneeling down to their level. "Lots of work in moving all those feet. Maybe he gets tired."

"He should take a nap." Techno suggests.

"No rest for him." Wil disagrees. "He's a criminal."

"Oh, yeah." Technoblade nods, like he accidentally forgot that fact.

“Why is he a criminal?” Phil asks curiously. “What crimes did he commit?”

“Too many legs.” Techno answers, shaking his head like it’s a horrible offense. Phil shakes his head along with him, clicking his tongue.

“Back to jail you go.” Wilbur says, lowering the centipede back down. Phil leans forward, and finds that they’ve taken the time to dig holes into the ground to keep their prisoners contained.

“Should’ve had less legs.” Phil murmurs, Wilbur giggling. Techno sounds as if he’s holding back a laugh.

“Look at this one.” Wilbur says, reaching into the dirt and pulling a beetle out.

“What’s their crime?” Phil asks.

“Bad fashion sense.” Techno supplies. “It’s a boring gray.”

“Could’ve been a cool gray. Or a mellow gray. No. They’re boring.” Wilbur sounds so disappointed in the little bug. “Jail.” He declares, putting the beetle back in its hole.

“How many prisoners have you got locked up here?” Phil asks, glancing over the small piles of dirt that’s thrown to the side. He notes now just how dirty their clothes have gotten, probably due to them digging through the ground to find their guilty victims. They’ve all going to need a bath after this.

“Seven. But there will be more.” Wilbur says sagely.

“The bugs must answer for their crimes.” Techno drawls, leaning his chin forward on the top of his knees.

“They get no weapons. And no friends. But they do get a leaf.” Wilbur then supplies a leaf into one of the holes. “Enjoy your leaf. Enjoy it while it lasts.”

Phil chuckles lightly. He nearly goes to ask about the rest of the bugs they’ve got trapped under their watch, but his questions are interrupted by an abrupt crying against his chest.

“Oh, oh.” Phil looks down at Tommy, quickly adjusting the cloth wrapped over his shoulder. “Hello. Someone’s awake.”

Tommy wails, clearly not happy with that. Both Techno and Wil scoot closer to him.

“Good morning.” Technoblade greets, Tommy trying to reach a hand out so he can grab onto something. Techno offers his hand. Tommy grabs on.

“Why are you crying, hm?” Phil asks, like Tommy can answer. He fully frees Tommy from where he’s wrapped up in fabric, and sits him down on his lap, trying to soothe his tears. “What’s wrong, now?”

“Maybe he’s hungry.” Wilbur suggests, leaning forward and nudging his head against Tommy’s curls for a second. “I’m hungry.” He says, a clear confession.

Phil gives a breathless laugh. “Alright. We’ll go get something to eat. We should clean up anyway. You’re all covered in dirt.”

“You are too.” Techno defends, pulling his hand away from Tommy’s. Tommy whines with that, but he goes quiet at the noise of Phil giving a chirp. Wilbur tries to mimic the noise. It sounds a little funny, but it makes Phil’s heart squeeze.

“Eh.” Tommy says, reaching a hand up at Phil’s face. “Eh?”

“What?” Phil whispers, like Tommy’s saying a secret.

“He sounds like Techno.” Wilbur says then. “*Heh?*”

“Heh.” Techno copies, but it’s not as authentic as it could be.

“Heh?” Tommy mimics, and Wilbur bursts out laughing. Techno laughs with him. Tommy continues trying to raise a hand up to Phil’s face, so Phil leans in. When he does, though, Tommy then opens his mouth, trying to bite down on the tip of Phil’s nose. Phil moves away before Tommy can succeed.

“Don’t bite my nose, you lamb.” Phil lightly scolds, and he gives Tommy a quick kiss on the forehead, before moving to get off from the ground. He grunts as he stands up, and Tommy screams, like he’s trying to get all their attention. He’s already got it.

“C’mon, you two.” Phil says, watching Techno and Wilbur get up with him. “Let’s head back.”

“But what about our prisoners?” Techno asks. “They’re gonna escape.”

“Only solution is death.” Wilbur says, and he kicks some dirt over the holes. Phil doesn’t think that’s going to kill them off.

“I’m sure they’ll stay where they’re meant to be.” Phil fibs, moving through the garden, towards the path back home. “If not, you can track them down later.”

“Don’t move!” Wilbur threatens, grabbing onto Techno’s hand as they begin to walk away. “If any of you leave your hole, there will be no leaves for one whole year!”

Phil cackles with the silly threat. He's sure the bugs are absolutely shivering in fear.

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Sunset begins to creep up by the time they return to the house. Phil walks into his living room with lines drawn out across the walls, clear measurements scribbled out. He hums in satisfaction with the sight of it. It's a start.

His first thought is to go start a bath for his dirty children, but he's distracted by a little something.

"Oh, hey." Techno says, pulling something out of his pocket. Phil finds it to be a small beetle, this time a light brown. "A criminal."

"He tried to use us as an escape route!" Wilbur gasps, leaning onto Techno's shoulder. He glares intensely at the creature in Techno's palms. "Evil..."

Phil snorts, adjusting Tommy in his arms. Tommy snuggles into his shoulder. "Let him go free, mate."

"But he's evil." Technoblade frowns up at Phil, like that's an obvious fact he's missing.

"He needs to be locked up." Wilbur declares. "Forever and ever." He shakes his head, like there's just nothing else that can happen.

"Forgive him of his evil ways." Phil gently suggests, and he holds out a hand towards Techno. Techno puts the beetle in his palm. "I'm sure he'll do better out there than in here."

"You can't set him free." Wilbur protests. "He *has* to be locked up."

“Why?” Phil asks. “What’s this one’s crime?” He expects something of the color again, or maybe something silly, like he doesn’t walk right.

“He’s evil.” Wilbur simply says. It’s a lackluster answer. “Evil beetle.”

“Does he look evil?” Phil questions, holding the beetle towards both Wil and Techno. They seem to stare very closely. “I think he just looks like a beetle.”

“...Nope.” Techno disagrees. “He’s evil.”

“Uh-huh.” Wilbur shrugs. “He’s got a thirst for blood in his eyes, can’t you see it?”

Phil laughs. He supposes he lacks a good sight for bug morals.

“Alright, then. Go fling him out into exile.” He holds the beetle out, nodding towards the door. Wilbur excitedly takes the bug from him, Techno quickly heading to pull the front door open.

Wil throws the bug out at full force, watching it hurl through the air, all the way into the grass. “Freedom!” He yells. “Go be free! Be evil!”

“Do crime!” Techno adds, wanting to be encouraging. “Kill a fellow bug!”

Phil grins with a slight wheeze, calling them back as soon as they’re done yelling out towards their evil beetle. “Go start a bath, both of you. I’ll go figure out dinner.”

“Ahhg.” Wilbur says, his expression going sour. “Evil. The beetle corrupted you.”

“Go on.” Phil urges them on, ignoring their complaints. “You’re not getting dirt into the bed tonight.” They run off into the bathroom, Phil walking past down the hall. He heads into the kitchen.

Skeppy’s sitting at the table, bent over papers that are scattered across, a pencil in hand. He looks almost frustrated as he squints at the drawings. Phil assumes they’re plans for the construction on the house. Bad is nowhere to be seen.

He knocks on the doorway twice, catching Skeppy’s attention. Skeppy looks up from where he had been marking something down on paper, and Phil smiles.

“Where’s Bad?” He asks, glancing around the kitchen like the demon might just somehow be hiding.

“Looking through your shed.” Skeppy answers, looking back at the papers.

“That thing’s a mess, good luck to him.” Phil murmurs, and Skeppy snorts. “Hey, mind if I ask you a favor?”

Skeppy looks back at him, sitting up straight as a response.

“Do you think you’d be able to go down to the town nearby and gather us some potions? All the ones I had before are no good, and while we have the medkit, I’d rather not go without potions, in case of anything.” While Phil did prepare accordingly before leaving this place behind, having thrown out anything that would rot and putting anything away that might gather too much dust, he had failed to account for his stock of potions.

Time takes its toll, and it’s sure taken his damn potions. He doesn’t trust drinking any of that. He’s fairly sure his healing potions have turned green. Whatever that’s turned into, he doesn’t want to know. He’s not finding out himself, that’s for sure.

“I think we still have some gold lying around...” Phil trails off, trying to think where he last left it. Tommy demands his attention then, trying to grab at his hair. Phil just blows a raspberry onto his palm. Tommy squeals.

Skeppy hums in thought. “Yeah, I could go. I was hoping to head out soon, anyway. We need some stuff if we’re going to remodel this house.”

“We’re just adding a second floor.” Phil says, almost like a reminder.

“Which means stairs, which means making room for the stairs, which means cutting a hole through one of your walls and making a whole new wall-- but, yeah, I’ll go.” Skeppy shakes his head, cutting off the start of a ramble. “Prooobably tomorrow morning. I’d have to take Bad with me, though.”

“That’s fine.” Phil shrugs. He can handle the kids on his own for one day. “Although, wouldn’t he catch attention?”

“Yeah, but he can carry all the stuff.” Skeppy grins, and Phil scoffs. “Just for the way back. He won’t be going into town, don’t worry.”

“Just be careful.” Phil warns. “The main thing right now is just staying hidden.” The last thing Phil wants is for this place to be found out. There’s so much connected with him here, and it’s his home, truly. With that piece of stone holding carved wings far past the trees, Phil knows he’d do anything to stay here. He’d fortify this whole damn forest, if need be.

This place holds love. Phil will have his kids grow up happy here, that is a promise.

“Mhm-hm.” Skeppy nods, his eyes drifting back to the plans on the table. “I’ve got it, Phil. And also, we won’t need gold.”

Phil falters in confusion, Tommy babbling quietly to him. “How are you going to pay, then?”

Skeppy looks up, knocking his knuckles against the diamonds on his face. It clinks. "I'm worth a lot."

Phil clicks his tongue. "Skeppy."

"Hey, don't give me that dad look." Skeppy says, and Phil nearly chokes. "I'm just going to chip a few pieces off, it's not painful. It's kinda like trimming my fingernails." He holds out his hands, as if needing to observe them. "I don't need it. It'll grow back." He waves a hand, trying to push off Phil's small wave of worry.

Phil huffs, rolling his eyes. "Well, if it works..." Here he had thought for a second that Skeppy was going to injure himself just to provide for them. That's a drastic decision they won't resort to.

"It does!" Skeppy yells. "I'm an expensive individual!" Phil only laughs with that, and Skeppy clinks his knuckles against the hard surface of his face once again.

"Ahh!" Tommy yells, and Phil yells quietly back, mimicking the noise.

"Ahh."

"Bah."

"Sheep." Phil says, looking for a pot. "Wait, no. Lamb."

"Lah." Tommy says, and Phil pauses. He looks towards Tommy.

"Lamb." Phil insists.

“Lalala.” Tommy repeats, and darn, there goes that chance.

“One day.” Phil promises, and he kisses Tommy on the top of his head, continuing his efforts on dinner.

## Chapter End Notes

\*crashes through your window\* Hi! So this chapter was supposed to be like. last week. But I got sad. Now I'm not sad. Now i'm just crying profusely over family dynamics. I love my life.

Thanks for reading leave a comment to sponsor the next chapter where there will be Cuddles

# little moments (the good and the bad)

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Sometimes, during the mornings, when the world is still waking up, the birds outside sound like Phil.

Or maybe Phil is the one that sounds like birds. Wilbur isn't sure which one is right, but both the noises they make are the same. That little high pitched chirp, sweet notes made into tiny songs-- Wilbur knows it.

He hears it around Tommy, mostly. When words aren't enough to keep him from being fussy, that's when Phil begins to whistle, to chirp and sing like the morning birds, light and soft and pretty. Tommy's attention is always caught by it. Wilbur will admit, his attention gets caught too.

Phil didn't ever chirp when it was just Techno and Wil. Not even on the worst nights, with the hunters cornering them in town, did he ever make that noise to calm them down. So Wilbur assumes, with all his grand evidence, that the chirping *must* be a bird thing.

It can't be a baby thing, because Wilbur is *not* a baby, and he has definitely found himself turning his head when Phil makes those chirping noises. Tommy isn't exactly a bird person, not like how Phil is with his feathers and his songs and his watchful eyes, but he has his own tiny wings on his back, and Wilbur feels like that's close enough to count. What makes a bird a bird, anyway? Wil declares it to be the wings.

A tiny part of him wishes *he* had wings. Wishes he knew how it would feel to fly, all on his own, up amongst the clouds with nothing but himself and the vast, open sky. It seems like a very freeing thing. It also seems kinda scary, when Wilbur thinks about it a bit more. Being so high up, with the risk of falling far, far down...it makes his heart drop into his stomach.

He'll stick to touching the clouds when held in his father's arms. If he had wings, he wouldn't trust himself to stay steady, but Phil would never drop him.

The sound of singing birds echoes quietly from the forest trees. Wilbur sits alone on the grass, legs criss-crossed before him, his hands picking at the grass and making little patches of dirt. He likes listening to the birds when he can, likes trying to compare their songs to the songs of his father. He doesn't always get the chance to listen. Usually, at this time of the day, Skeppy and Bad make too much noise with the house, cutting up wood and breaking apart cobble. Wil knows it's needed, since the house is old and needs more space for the company within it, but that doesn't mean it's not annoying. He can't hear the forest's singing if Skeppy's yelling for some random tool and Bad is hacking away at some part of a wall.

Wilbur's fingers twist at a long strand of grass, pulling and pulling until it's torn out and then added to the pile beside his knee. A faint warbling of a bird drifts out from the treeline. Wil's fins twitch at the noise.

He leans forward with his hands pressed against the ground, squinting at the branches to try and spot any sort of movement. He knows he won't find anything. If there's one thing he's found out by listening to the birds, it's that the birds know how to hide.

(He can't help but smile with amusement for that thought, thinking of this home tucked away in the trees, hidden away beside a mountain. His dad really *is* a bird.)

Another warbling chirp from afar reaches Wilbur's ears, so he licks his lips with a lift of confidence and blows, trying hard to reply. Nothing but a faint squeak of air comes out. The birds sing again, maybe as an encouragement, maybe as a mocking for his attempt.

Wilbur scrunches his nose, trying once more, getting a broken whistle out before having it dissolve into a sad, sputtering noise. He tries again, harsher and more determined. It works even less. He tries it a little softer. It works, somewhat, but ultimately, he's left only with pursed lips and a fumbling high-pitched sound.

He sighs with a disappointed frown, leaning back. Phil makes it seem so *easy*. Maybe it is easy for him, being a bird person and all, but plenty of other people can whistle without effort, too. Wil's seen and heard it before. Why can't he do the same?

He can charm a man to put a knife through his own throat, he can convince hunters to put down their weapons and walk away with just his voice, but he can't make a tiny whistle. That seems unfair.

Wil spends the next half-hour trying to fix this. He sputters and squeaks and huffs with annoyance, and eventually he does manage to grasp a low sort of whistle, to which he focuses so hard on that he doesn't hear the quiet footsteps shuffling up behind him. He whistles sporadically at the birds, trying to hear their chirping past his own flat song, and then a tall shadow falls over him.

Wilbur stops, tilting his head up, the attempt of a bird's song dying on his tongue as he takes in the warm smile of his father. He's wearing his hat today, his hair loose around his face with a tiny little tangled braid tucked behind his ear. Wil knows the braid is Techno's work. He's been practicing braiding on Phil's hair rather often these days.

"Hi there." Phil whispers down at Wil, as if not wanting to disturb the peaceful air around them. "What are you doing?" He asks, curious, yet ever so slightly teasing.

Wilbur's mouth hangs ajar, a tiny unsure noise coming from his throat. He's usually good with his words, and usually he's glad to see his dad, but he's not sure if he's willing to confess today that he was trying to talk with the birds. It feels a little silly, since Wil's not a bird person.

"Nothing." Wil whispers back. He says it a little too quick, and his cheeks feel a little too warm. "I wasn't doing anything." He adds on, only making it worse. "I'm just sitting here."

"Yeah?" Phil grins knowingly, and Wilbur is left in a panicked wonder at how long his dad has been standing behind him. Did he hear all of Wilbur's embarrassing attempts at whistling? "It is a nice day to sit out here."

It really is. For once, the sun isn't too hot, and the sky is scattered with clouds, letting Wil feel comfortable enough to sit out in the open, away from the shade of a tree. The grass underneath him is soft and cool, and the air, while silent, still gives the occasional gentle breeze.

“Mm-hm.” Wil nods, lowering his head so he can focus his attention on now tearing up all the grass around him. He hears the shifting of movement at his side, and with a quick not-so-subtle glance, he sees that Phil’s now sat next to him on the ground. He rips the grass up by the fistful.

The birds chirp out again, ever persistent. Wilbur throws a handful of torn grass into the air, and Phil whistles back at the forest.

Slight envy twists in Wil’s chest. He glares at the ground as if that’s what has caused his failure in being able to whistle as beautifully as Phil. He grabs and yanks at a piece of grass, and grows annoyed when it is stubborn and refuses to be freed from the dirt.

“Stop tearing up the lawn.” Phil lightly scolds, and when Wilbur pays him no mind, arms wrap around his middle, pulling him away from where he sits and instead putting him onto his father’s lap. “You’re making dirt patches everywhere.”

“It’ll grow back.” Wilbur argues, and he leans against Phil without complaint, but still continues pulling at the grass from where he can reach it, dropping the torn bits all over Phil’s knee. He wonders if he could bury his dad’s leg completely if he just rips up enough of the plant.

Phil rests his chin onto Wil’s shoulder and watches with soft amusement as his son tries to cover his leg with grass bits. “What are you doing now?” He asks.

“Decoratin’.” Wilbur says simply, and Phil huff tickles against the side of his fin. He says nothing more, and lets Wilbur continue ripping up the lawn, on and on until he runs out of grass to grab at. He tries to reach further to get more, but Phil squeezes him tight in a hug to stop him. “Dad!” He whines.

Phil only laughs. He chuckles with his head against Wil’s, and then he whistles out towards the trees, responding to the birds who never seem to go quiet until the morning has shifted into afternoon. Wilbur listens to his dad’s song, pretty little notes calling out, and he quietly tries to copy it.

It doesn't quite work. Phil stops whistling, and Wilbur doesn't stop in time to not be caught. He slaps his hands over his mouth.

"Are you trying to copy the birds?" Phil asks, sounding only fond as he cradles Wilbur closer against his chest. Wilbur watches the pile of grass fall off from Phil's knee, and lifts his chin up to try and look up to his father's face.

"I'm trying to copy you." He says honestly. "I don't know how you do it. My whistles keep dying."

"I've had plenty of practice." Phil brushes Wil's hair back from his face, making Wilbur close his eyes and scrunch his nose. "I was taught how to whistle before I learned how to walk."

"Bird person." Wilbur murmurs, lowering his head back down to stare towards the trees.

"What's that?"

"Nothing." Wilbur pats at Phil's knee, trying to clean off the grass, since it's all mostly gone now. "If you can whistle easily, then do you think you can call one of the birds over?"

"Is that what you were trying to do?" Phil asks curiously, and Wilbur shrugs. He wasn't aiming to lure any birds out from their tree branches, but if there's anyone he thinks capable of doing such a thing, he's sure Phil would be the one.

Phil begins to sing another one of his whistling songs, with warbling chirps and short, high notes. Wilbur relaxes further into his dad's arms with the sound of it, giving a small smile with the sweet familiarity of it. He's almost tempted to close his eyes and simply listen, but then there's a rustle of leaves from the trees that catches his eye.

Suddenly, out bursts a tiny bird, with brown colored feathers and black eyes. It glides down onto the grass by the treeline, then hops along on its little feet, coming closer bit by bit. It

seems like a curious little thing, though awfully wary. Wilbur watches it with wide eyes, not having expected for his dad to actually call a bird out from the tree branches.

It hops up to their feet, so close that Wil thinks it'll find a spot right upon Phil's knee. Instead, it chooses to keep a short distance, backing up and chirping back to Phil's song. Phil whistles at it with a laugh in his throat. Wilbur tries to whistle with him, and he manages to somewhat succeed, although he does end with a sputtering sort of a noise.

Phil stops with his song so that he can laugh freely out into the air, and Wilbur laughs with him, eyes still locked onto the little bird. It stays where it is, staring at them both, and Wil has a spontaneous urge to hold it within his palms. He lifts up a hand. The bird hops backwards.

"You won't be fast enough to snatch it up, mate." Phil whispers to Wil's ear, but Wilbur isn't looking to lunge out at it with his claws. He doesn't want to hurt it, he wants to hold it. Wants to touch its feathers, see if they're as similar as his dad's wings.

"I just want to hold it." Wil answers. He holds his hand out, as if asking for the bird to come land on his fingers. The bird only hops back further, looking to the trees as if it's about to fly away.

"Come here." Wilbur says hopefully, wiggling his fingers and trying to coax it over. "*Come here.*" He says again, his voice echoing softly in the air.

The bird stops. It turns back to Wil, its head tilting this way and that way, observing him and his hand. For a second, Wilbur truly thinks it's going to come over. He thinks it'll work, and he'll have a cute little bird in his hand.

Then the bird flies off without a second thought, rushing into the trees to be hidden by the leaves again.

"Fuck." Wilbur huffs, slumping back against Phil with a disappointed frown, crossing his arms over his chest. Phil snorts at his upset reaction, holding him a little tighter as a consolation. "That was supposed to work."

“Guess it didn’t want to listen.” Phil pats gently at his shoulder, and Wilbur gives a grumpy noise, twisting around in his father’s lap so he can bury his face away into his shirt. Let him hide from his failures here, no one will dare to protest. Phil can hide him away behind his wings, and Wilbur won’t need to feel anything other than love.

Phil grins over Wilbur’s head, holding onto his son a bit more firmly before then leaning back and laying onto the grass behind him. Wilbur makes a surprised noise at having the world turn sideways, but he settles easily enough on Phil’s chest. Slowly, he reaches a hand out to the grass next to them. He grabs a handful and tears it from the ground.

“Do you think my voice could work on other animals?” Wilbur questions, opening his palm and letting the grass fall right back to where it grew. “You know, telling them what to do, making them listen. It works with people. Didn’t work with the bird, but...”

Phil makes a thoughtful noise, running hand over the back of Wilbur’s head, brushing his fingers through his curls. “Have you ever tried it on other animals?”

Wilbur thinks for a long moment. He grasps at a section of the lawn, and then goes still with a faint memory poking out in his mind. He barely recalls the fear of running through scattered trees, the loud barking of dogs echoing out behind him. He remembers the ache in his throat when screaming at them to stop giving chase, and the sting on his ankle when one of them caught up enough to give a nip at his skin.

“Yeah.” Wilbur breathes out, and curls up into Phil’s embrace, forgetting about picking at the grass and wanting only to be held. “It didn’t work.”

“Maybe it could, one day.” Phil wonders. “You’re still so small. Maybe one day you’ll be able to call out to the trees and get all the birds to come out.”

Wilbur is interested in that idea, but ultimately, it’s not what he wants. “I’d rather whistle.” He confesses. “Like how you whistle.”

“You’re going to need lots of practice, then, little songbird.” Phil teases, and Wilbur twists his lips into a scowl, whacking a hand against his father’s collarbone. Phil laughs while giving poor attempt at stopping him.

“I’m trying!” Wilbur insists.

“I know, I know-!” Phil cackles, Wilbur furiously continuing trying to attack him, even as his wrists are caught by Phil.

“I’m not a bird person!” Wilbur argues, pushing at Phil’s chest so he can scoot back and sit upright on the ground right beside him. “I don’t have wings, like you.”

Phil lifts his head up from the grass to look at Wilbur directly, and he has a funny sort of smile on his face, like he’s not sure whether to laugh or to be confused. “An avian.” He says.

Wilbur furrows his brow with a frown. “...what.”

Phil scoffs lightly, and he sits up from the ground, pulling Wil into his arms again like he’s too precious for the world. “I’m an avian, my little songbird. Not a bird person, an avian. That’s what they call it.”

“Who’s they?” Wilbur gives an incredulous face. “And that doesn’t make sense. You’re like a bird, so you’re a bird person.” He says that like it’s the only logical way to put it, and Phil shakes his head with a roll of his eyes. “You’re a bird dad.”

“Then you’re a fish son.” Phil says back, pressing his forehead against Wil’s, poking at the scales at his cheek. Wilbur’s fins shift at the sides of his head, and he purses his lips, as if taking in that title. Then he nods.

“Yeah.” He seems content with that sort of naming. It follows his line of thinking.

Phil looks at Wilbur for a second more, then he wraps him up in his arms and sends them both to roll across the ground, Wilbur squealing and kicking the entire time as Phil laughs with both exasperation and love.

---

The river that runs nearby isn't much different from how Phil remembers it. The path that leads to it is long overgrown, in need of a good sweeping, but the river itself is the same as it's always been. If there is any change that Phil is to point out, it would be that there are a few more flowers growing along the riverbank, whites and yellows and even a few pinks.

Wilbur goes straight for the water as soon as the river is in sight. He had told Phil time and time again how excited he was to try swimming in it, but even that doesn't prepare Phil for the sheer enthusiasm the kid holds while he throws himself at the currents. He yells at Wilbur to be careful, to not hit his head against a rock or swallow a mouthful of the water, but Wil hardly cares, and he's a sturdy little menace, anyway. He'd be fine regardless.

Wil splashes at the rushing water and sinks into the river like it's a second home, and once he's over the initial joy of now being able to live so close to a river, he turns onto his brother with a determined gleam in his eyes. Technoblade is none the wiser, instead distracted by the flowers at his feet, his eyes searching for specific colors. Poor soul.

Phil lets them be for a minute, and wanders around the trees beside the river with Tommy on his hip. He takes in the forest surroundings, growing accustomed to it again, but this time with the sound of his Wilbur begging for Techno to come join him in the water. Technoblade protests against it like Wilbur's asking him to leap off a cliff, and after a long few minutes of intense bickering, it's put to a halt with a loud shriek, courtesy of Wilbur getting fed up and throwing water at Techno's face.

"DAD!" Technoblade screams, and Phil gives an unconcerned look over his shoulder, feeling Tommy kick excitedly against his side as Techno screams again. He laughs, all giggly and evil, at the sound of chaos. "Wil's throwing water at me!"

"Throw water back." Phil calls, turning his attention back to the forest, eyes scanning over plants growing underneath him.

“He’s already *in* the water!”

There’s the sound of Techno screaming again, high-pitched and panicked, and then Wilbur begins to scream, and Techno’s gained a victorious sort of cackle that makes Phil slightly worry as to what he’s doing to his brother.

“Techno!” Phil calls, walking back.

“He’s throwing rocks at me!” Wilbur yells, before hiding in the river with a splash of water.

“Technoblade!” Phil scolds. It would do no good for Wilbur to get a damn concussion in the first ten minutes of them enjoying their day at the river.

“He *started* it!”

---

The day is hot with the sun overhead, but Technoblade feels none of its warmth with the way his clothes keep getting soaked every other hour.

It seems like each time he finally dries off, Wilbur decides then to come crawling out of the river, like some terrible wet fish monster thing who’s just grown arms and legs. And once he’s out of the river, dripping wet and freezing cold, he narrows his sights down on Techno and throws himself onto him in what he insists is a brotherly hug.

Technoblade sees it for what it is. It’s a murder attempt. He screams for Phil each time, hitting at Wilbur’s face while Wil rubs his wet hair into his sleeve, but by the time their dad even manages to come near, Wilbur’s already sprinting away, jumping back into the water with Technoblade having effectively been used as a towel.

Phil thinks it's hilarious. Not because of Techno's reaction and the way he scrunches up his face like he ate a lemon (although, that is pretty funny too) but because of the sheer contrast of Wilbur grabbing at Techno and spouting things such as "I love you! Mwah mwah!" while Techno responds intensely with "I WILL THROW ROCKS AT YOU AGAIN."

He doesn't laugh at Techno, though, thankfully. He gives a little smile like he wants to laugh, but all he does is brush Techno's hair out from his face and insist for him to dry off beside the riverbank yet again.

"Pick some of the flowers." He suggests, before going after Tommy as the little menace earnestly tries to crawl to the river to join his older brother. "If you collect enough of them, I'll make a crown for you."

That raises Techno's mood enough to not be annoyed for the day. He sits down beside the river as Phil busies himself with gathering branches and entertaining Tommy, and he collects flowers in his lap, organizing them with care.

He picks them all one by one, color by color, so that each of his piles stays equal in number, and equal in size, since he's meticulous about the length of the stem, as well. By the time he's gathered ten of each one, there's a familiar splash of water near him, and he raises his chin with a warning glare.

Wilbur sits at the edge of the river, grinning wide with his sharp teeth. There's water dripping from his hair, off of his nose, and his fins twitch as he brushes his fingers across his face, wiping the excess water from his eyes.

"Hi." He greets, and Techno quickly flings a pebble at him. "Ow! Dad!" Wilbur screams, even though the pebble hadn't even hit him, landing into the water beside him instead.

"Techno." Phil calls, a warning tone sitting underneath his voice.

"It was a pebble!" Technoblade defends, and Phil laughs lightly, turning back to what he was doing. "You'll live." He says to Wilbur, who frowns deeply before splashing water out as a

threat. It doesn't hit Techno, but he still pulls his feet closer to him anyway, quickly grabbing his flowers before they fall out of his lap.

"You still haven't come to play in the water with me." Wil complains, lifting his hand up as a threat to flick the water on his fingertips and have it land onto Techno's legs.

"Because I don't want to." Technoblade scoots back, trying to get out of range. "It's cold."

"No it's not!" Wilbur dips his hands into the currents, as if checking the temperature, as if he isn't currently in the river itself. "It's perfect. Very nice-feeling."

"It's freezing." Technoblade deadpans, his ear flicking with annoyance. "You feel like ice every time you come and hug me."

Wilbur sits up straight, stretching his arms out. "I'm warmer this time, I swear."

"Liar."

"Well," Wilbur huffs, standing to his feet and coming towards Techno, who scrambles to stand on his feet and get a safe distance away. "-of course it's going to be cold to *you* if you keep sitting outside of the river. You have to be *in* the water."

"That sounds like a scam." Technoblade shakes his head strongly. "I think I will stick to the dry ground, thank you very much."

Wilbur sighs disappointedly, but he nods, eyes downcast. Then he points at the flowers. "Hey, you dropped one."

Technoblade immediately looks to where Wilbur is pointing, then he gets slammed in the side with Wilbur wrapping his wet arms around him and holding on for dear life.

“No-!” Techno shrieks, dropping his flowers to the side and trying to pry Wil off from him. Unfortunately, Wilbur has an unrelenting grip when he puts his mind to it, and it seems like nothing short of death will make him let go.

“Mwah!” Wil tries to kiss Techno at the side of his head, just like how Phil does it, but he only manages to kinda nudge his head against Techno’s. He wrestles with Technoblade to try and hug him closer, and Techno screams as if he’s getting murdered.

“DAD!” He yells, and they both tilt with their weight, hitting the ground in a tumble of limbs and screaming.

“Boys.” Phil calls, but they’re both really in it now, slapping their hands at each other with kicking feet, battle cries for this fight to the bitter end. “Boys! Stop trying to kill each other!” Phil calls again, taking Tommy from where he had been gnawing on a rock and placing him on his hip so he can go break up the two of them.

“He’s trying to kill me *first*-!”

“I’m *hugging* you!”

The two of them roll across the ground, screaming again, and Phil desperately holds back a laugh, telling himself neither of the kids would appreciate him laughing at them right now.

“Wilbur!” Phil sternly says. Wilbur pauses, held mid-air with Techno’s palm squished against his face. “Technoblade.” Techno’s stopped with him, teeth bared in something that might look like anger at first glance, but upon further inspection, is actually a rather wild looking smile. “Can we not act like wild animals?”

“I’m very civilized.” Wilbur declares, then he twists his head out from Techno’s hand and shoves his wet hair right into Techno’s shirt. Technoblade shrieks.

“Oh my gods- come here, get off him-”

“I’m going to *murder* you!” Techno threatens. Wilbur cackles maniacally. Phil pries the two of them apart with a hand, a foot, and the audience of one baby on his hip who seem to be immensely enjoying seeing his brothers try and go for each other’s throat.

He manages to get Wilbur off and on his feet, and he pushes him over to the river, shoos him away with a waving hand. “If you have so much energy to annoy your brother, then go use it and catch a couple of fish for us. Go on, go ahead. That’s our lunch.” Wilbur is very easily swayed by the idea of fish to eat. He runs back to the river as if it’s calling his name.

Technoblade sits on the ground with the grumpiest of all grumpy frowns on his face, but in his eyes, there’s a glint of amusement. Phil fondly sighs down at him.

“Did you get your flowers?” He asks, and Technoblade perks up, taking Phil’s outstretched hand and searching across the ground with a near frantic energy. He spots his bundle of flowers just a few feet away, a little jostled from being dropped to the ground, but overall, perfectly fine. He picks them up and holds them proudly towards Phil. “Good. Here, trade.” Phil takes the flowers from his hands, moving to give Tommy to Techno.

“But I’m wet.” Technoblade takes a step back, looking down at his shirt.

“I don’t think Tommy will mind a bit of water, mate.” Phil chuckles, and Technoblade takes his little brother easily after that, cradling him with care. Tommy digs his hands into Techno’s hair and pulls. “Come on, you can dry off by the fire.”

“Fire?” Techno asks, wincing slightly from Tommy trying to yank his scalp off. He follows Phil further down the riverbank, to where Phil had been setting up a fire earlier so they would be able to cook fish for the afternoon. “Oh. A fire.”

“Go sit.” Phil pushes Techno along, and Technoblade finds himself a spot in front of the flames, glad for the heat. He adjusts Tommy so that he’s sitting on his leg, but when Tommy begins to kick and fuss, he lifts him to stand on his tiny feet instead, holding on tight to his

hands so that he won't fall over. Tommy seems perfectly content with this, and his scaled wings lift up with joy as Techno guides his arms to the sky.

"Look, you're standing." Technoblade praises, and Tommy gives a squeal of excitement. "You're standing all on your own." Techno is very much holding him up, but technically, Tommy *is* using his legs on his own. It's a very grand milestone.

Eventually, Tommy gets bored of the wonders of standing. He falls backwards into Techno's arms, and sits content in between his thighs, picking at the ground and trying hard to reach towards a rock near Techno's foot.

"When do you think he's going to start walking?" Technoblade asks Phil, who's taken up his own spot by the fire, Techno's picked flowers in his lap, the beginnings of a flower crown in his hands. Phil smiles warmly, a sort of amusement in his eyes as he looks up to Techno and Tommy.

"Well, we'd have to stop picking him up so often first." Phil points out. Techno blinks at Phil like he's said something rather upsetting. He turns his attention back to Tommy, turning him so they can have a conversation face to face.

"You don't need to learn how to walk, Tommy, you can push that back for later." Technoblade insists, shaking his head as if Tommy must be convinced of this.

"Wa-wa-wa." Tommy says, giving very eloquent points on this matter.

"Walk-walk-walk." Technoblade nudges his forehead against Tommy's. "Later. You can put it off for another year. Who needs walking? Not you. We'll just carry you everywhere."

Phil snorts, picking up another flower from his lap and twisting it with the others. As he does, there comes the splashing of water and the sound of fast-coming footsteps, and all three people at the fire lift their heads to see Wil running over with three fish in arms, and one in his mouth.

Phil puts the flower crown down with a slight wheeze, Wilbur coming to a stop before them and spitting out the fish at Techno's feet.

"That's appetizing." Technoblade says. Tommy tries to reach for the fish and Technoblade shifts him far out of its range, instead giving him a rock to play with. Tommy is plenty content with this. He likes rocks.

"I got fish." Wilbur informs them all, just in case they chose to not use their eyeballs.

"Good job." Phil smiles, and he holds his hands out for said fish, taking them from Wilbur and skewing them on sticks so that they can be put over the fire. Wilbur takes a seat next to Techno, excited to be able to eat cooked fish, and Technoblade doesn't even act wary of how soaking wet he is, because he's too busy trying to pry a rock out from Tommy's mouth.

"If you're hungry, you can just wait a few minutes longer." Technoblade says over Tommy's whining, after some brotherly teamwork with him and Wilbur getting the rock out from his jaws. Seriously, babies should not be so strong. Why did it take the two of them to get that rock away?

"I'll tell you when they're done." Phil says, twisting the fish on their sticks so that the other sides face the flames. The fire pops against his hand, and Phil jerks back, clicking his tongue and sitting back down with his half-done flower down. "Wilbur, could you do me a favor and get some more branches for the fire?"

"Okay." Wilbur jumps to his feet, happy to help. He runs off towards the trees in search of any fallen sticks, and Technoblade watches the fire and fish, seeing the heat cook up the skin and turn it steaming hot. One of the sticks shifts from the weight of the fish on it, the bottom not having been secured properly in the ground, and when it begins to fall right into the smack center of the fire, Techno doesn't think, he just reaches out and grabs at the fish to save it.

"Techno-!" Phil drops the flower crown instantly and grabs at Techno's hand, pulling him away from the fire and hissing as he throws the still steaming hot fish to the side. "Are you okay, are you-?"

Phil pauses, expecting for Technoblade to be wincing at the pain of touching something that is still mid-way in the process of cooking. Instead, Techno blinks at him with a dumbfounded sort of expression, holding Tommy against him with his hand in Phil's shaking palms.

"Uh." Techno says, closing and opening his own hand, confused at the fact he's not burnt at all. Then he looks at Phil's hand, and notes that he certainly got burnt on his own palm.  
"UH." He says, with more panic.

"I'm okay." Phil waves off, but Techno's not having it. "I'm okay, Techno. I thought you had grabbed it-"

"I did grab it!" Technoblade cuts him off, taking Phil's hand. Now he's the worrier. "I didn't want it to fall and just get burnt up in the sticks, so I- go stick your hand in the river."

Phil huffs, although there's a trace of confusion on his brow. "Sweetheart, it's a tiny burn. I'll heal in like five minutes. What do you mean you grabbed it?"

"I mean, I grabbed it, I put my hand in there." Techno pauses. He looks at the fire again, then lifts his hand towards the flames, Phil quickly snatching him by the wrist.

"No."

"Wait, look, I was-"

Phil shakes his head. "No, you are not putting your hand back in there-"

"-it didn't even do anything, so technically-"

"Techno, stop putting your hand in the fucking fire-"

“I’m from the nether!” Technoblade reminds, and Phil pauses. He pauses just enough for Techno to squirm his hand out from his grip and run his fingers through the edges of the flames, nervously cautious at first, then held with wonder when all he gets is the feeling of warmth, rather than the pain of a burn. “Oh, this makes *so* much sense.” He murmurs.

Phil stares with him, stuck in between pride and immense worry.

“Well.” He says, which is dad speak for ‘this is going to be terrible for my poor frail heart’, because he doesn’t think he can handle one of his sons having the habit of sticking his hands into fire.

Techno pulls his hand away with a look of wonder, staring over his unharmed fingers, and Wilbur chooses at that moment to come back from the forest with his pile of collected sticks.

An evil little smile crosses over Technoblade’s face.

“Hey Wilbur, look what I can do.” He says, making sure Wil’s looking right at him, and then he promptly sticks his entire hand right into the flames.

Over the sound of Wilbur’s panicked screaming, Phil wonders when he raised such little shits.

## Chapter End Notes

walks in, waves waves, takes a bow.

Hi! So I'm not dead! haha. Just busy. And constantly getting my ass kicked by god and life and school and generally everything. I currently have covid and its so not fun. I'm going to strangle a man.

anywayyyy. Apologies for the wait, but thank you for waiting! You get a golden sticker. And also family dynamics. So many family dynamics. I'm really emotional over these little guys they're just so hbfshbfhb

but also. Plot! Plot do be plotting. The boys do be growing! And yknow, even if Phil's raising them proper, they're still world enders.....haha that's gonna be fun. Such potential. (they're gonna be fucking terrifying.)

thanks for reading leave a comment I cried over sandduo while writing this bc I'm a weak man who can't handle them being soft K BYE

# Changes

## Chapter Notes

wanna see a magic trick?

SLAMS DOWN 10K WORDS

ABRACADABRA.

enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

There is an honest sort of enjoyment to be found in the constant routine of working on the house, night after night and day after day.

The progress of building the thing up is slow going and tedious, at times, but there's never a lack of support from the kids' end, at least. They always seem so excited to see it done, almost to the point where it's worrying, Wilbur and Technoblade shaking in place like they're going to explode into confetti within the next three seconds. (Skeppy holds no accountability for if said scenario occurs.)

He will admit this sense of enjoyment of the routine to himself and to only himself, because who is he if not the bringer of complaints to Bad's ears? As they tear down walls and put up new ones and rework the roof into a second floor, Skeppy does the bare minimum for every second he is within Bad's vicinity. He weeps and bemoans the effect of labor upon his frail diamond-covered arms, and the sheer annoyance that Bad sends his way is nothing short of hilarious.

There are the scoldings, of course, about Skeppy falling behind, then there are the arguments, then there are the screaming matches upon the roof, so loud that Skeppy's sure they're scaring off all the birds within a mile range of them. Bad yells and cries that Skeppy is being lazy and unproductive on purpose, and Skeppy responds in a shrill tone, whilst splayed out on the floor, soaking up the sunlight, that he is 'a fragile individual who needs proper care and love.'

It's all very dumb and all very stupid, and very on brand for the two of them. When the yelling is done, and they get over the ten-minute long silent treatment, they swap careful, heartfelt apologies and do the same thing all over again a day later.

Skeppy never takes anything that Bad says to heart, even if it's sometimes a bit much, being called an indolent, slothful, free-loader who can't even lift a piece of wood to save his life. (Honestly, the remarks are often more impressive to Skeppy than insulting, if only because Bad tends to be all hugs and no bites, all the time. He supposes that all that pent up frustration has to go somewhere. Isn't he so nice, being an outlet to vent towards?) Bad never truly gets upset about Skeppy taking his time with the workload, either, because for all his whining and lying around, he does truly get shit done when no one is looking. Case in point, that one night where he tore up half the lawn to redo parts of the stone path and had it looking beautifully neat and clean by sunrise.

It's about the drama of it all, really. The routine. They work upon the house, they argue upon the house, they turn their backs and act as if they're in desperate need of a divorce, then they make up and the cycle repeats. Phil thinks it's amusing, if his comments are any hint.

The point here is that Skeppy finds solace in the routine, and at the moment, he's within the calm, quiet part of it in which he secretly does the most he can while Bad is preoccupied with something else, so that later in the morning Bad can ask who made such progress and Skeppy can pretend to snore in response in where he's trying to take a nap on an awkward pile of wood.

It's a late, cool midnight, and Skeppy sits upon the half-done second floor, pouring his focus into the plans Phil's written up for them, meticulous in their detail and honestly very helpful, taking into account the fact it's been a while since they've built anything with their hands. He's cutting through pieces of wood and putting measured pieces to the side when a movement catches his attention in the corner of his eye.

He looks up, expecting it to be a bird or something, even if none tend to wander around whilst the moon is out. He finds nothing amongst the dark, and shrugs it off easily.

There's a shift of movement again.

Skeppy lifts his head again. Nothing. He leans to the side and cranes his neck to check around if maybe something might be hiding out of sight, but there's nothing to be seen. He returns to whatever he's doing.

A faint, fast noise of footsteps. Skeppy snaps his attention over to the sound, but it stops as soon as he looks. He turns away, slowly. It starts up again, even faster, circling around him. He whips his head around in a frantic search for the culprit, and comes up empty. It's quiet.

He looks away, and immediately feels like that's the wrong choice. There's something watching him. Something looking at him. He feels cornered, even if there is surely no chase to be had here. It's nothing, no doubt. It's probably just some animal that got onto the roof, and he'll shoo it away and be left alone. Yes. This is the rational option.

The footsteps rise up again and rationality goes out the window. Skeppy is going to *die* tonight, he is so sure of it.

Looking over his shoulder with a hitched breath, Skeppy expects only the worst to have crept up behind him, and sure enough, he comes face to face with a monster, its glowing purple eyes burning into his soul, terrifyingly vivid amongst the dark of the night.

He screams. Naturally. It echoes across the forest.

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It is no less than ten minutes later where the whole house is wide awake downstairs in the living room, with Tommy being the star of the night for his new apparent ability of being able to run around like a little demon. Somehow, he had slipped away from Phil's grasp in the middle of his sleep, had managed to climb off the bed, had traveled across the house and made his way upon the roof, where he then gave Skeppy such a fright that the man still hasn't let go of Bad, clinging onto his side like a very frowny, grumpy barnacle.

"Come here, Tommy. Over here." Wilbur calls from one side of the living room, kneeling down with his palms patting against the floorboards.

Tommy makes a wobbly turn from where he is, wings stretching out and giving a lazy flap at his back. Techno hovers his hands out behind him, just in case, and the toddler pays the concern no mind, instead just toddling along, running over to Wilbur with such confidence it makes Phil wonder if this isn't the first time he's taken his steps.

"Yes! Hello!" Wilbur laughs, pulling Tommy into a hug when he approaches him. Tommy seems content for the praise and the affection, then whines at the attempt of being put on Wil's lap, for he does not agree with the idea of restricting his yearning for freedom.

Wilbur lets him go with only a slight pout, and Tommy runs around the living room some more, circling around Techno and the table before making his way to Phil's legs at where he sits on the couch with Bad and Skeppy. Phil expects him to come to a stop, to demand attention by raising his hands and screaming, but he does no such thing.

Instead, he just keeps running, and slams right into Phil's knees. Wilbur tries to choke back a laugh. Technoblade doesn't choke back his at all, and cackles freely. Tommy sits on the floor with a face of shock, then proceeds to cry at the consequences of his own actions.

"Yeah, you're gonna need to learn to have some restraint with that, buddy." Phil says, reaching down and picking up his boy from the ground. "Slow down a bit. The world isn't going anywhere."

Tommy does not care for this piece of wisdom. He sits upon Phil's thigh and wails.

"You're going to need to keep a closer eye on him, now." Bad notes, wondering if this is the terrible start of a series of escape attempts.

"Like we don't already." Phil snorts. "Little shit is always causing trouble, either trying to eat anything in his range or trying to crawl away into the sunset."

"Now he can run." Technoblade says, grinning wide with both pride and lingering amusement from Tommy's fall.

“He can run.” Skeppy repeats in horror, sinking further into Bad’s side and eyeing Tommy like he’s the harbinger of end times. (Well. He is. Technically.)

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The new development of Tommy being able to sprint around the house like a tiny devil inspires the twins about the steps that will come after. Namely, the ability of speech.

They spend the entire morning chasing after Tommy, letting him run to his heart's desire in an effort to coax him to do their bidding. Phil doubts it’ll work, as if Tommy will bend to the idea of bribery, but it is adorable to hear all three of them shrieking and laughing with footsteps going up and down the hall, Tommy’s name called over and over again.

When the late afternoon rolls around and they’ve exhausted themselves out, Techno and Wil sit themselves down upon the couch with Tommy and begin the ordeal of trying to get Tommy to listen to them, to mimic their carefully chosen selection of words.

“Collaboration.”

“Wha- He’s not going to be able to fucking say the word ‘collaboration.’” Wilbur sputters, Techno ignoring him whole-heartedly with a slight grin. He lifts his hands and interlocks his fingers as a visual representation.

“Collaboration.” Technoblade repeats. “An alliance, if you will. Something you and I can make, against a certain someone in the general vicinity who I will not name.”

Tommy stares up at Techno with an open mouth as if very seriously considering this intriguing offer. Wilbur glares at Technoblade with an offense of the highest order. He pushes his brother by the shoulder and leans in towards Tommy.

“Can you say hello, Tommy? Or hi, that’s an easy one. Say hi.” He waves a hand up with a bright smile, and Tommy only blinks at him, eyes following the movement of his palm. He reaches out to grab at one of Wil’s fingers. Wilbur wisely retreats away to save his fingertips from the mouth of a child.

“Ah.” Tommy says. It’s, truly, very thought provoking and awe inspiring. Brings Phil to tears, really.

“How about library? Literature. L words.” Technoblade offers.

“Love.” Wilbur says warmly.

“Loser.” Technoblade says to Wil’s face. Wilbur smacks his hand into Techno’s stupid smile. Technoblade yells and leans away while trying to not be pushed off the couch. Tommy waves his arms around with a swinging tail against the cushions, very entertained by a brotherly squabble.

“Boys.” Phil snorts, keeping their bickering from snowballing into a full blown battle of flailing limbs and shrieking curse words. The two of them settle down, but they’re still trying to kick at each other’s ankles, and in their distraction, Phil offers a suggestion of his own. “Can you say your name, Tommy? Tom-my. That’s you.”

“Ta, ta, ta.” Tommy responds. “Ta. Ahhh!”

“Not quite.”

“Tom-my. Tom. With an M. Go mmm.” Wilbur tries to guide, and Tommy miraculously listens, mimicking Wilbur. “Yes, mm. Now go Tooommm. Tommm-me.”

“Mmmmm.” Tommy disregards any further instructions. He’s quite happy with this whole humming thing he’s got going on. “Mmmmmmmmm.”

“You broke him.” Technoblade says, heartbroken that their baby brother is now reduced to forever sound like a person in deep thought. At least he’s thinking. Maybe. “No more mmms. Something else, Tommy. Say Technoblade. Techno.”

“No, no!” Wilbur waves the suggestion off. “Say Wilbur! Wil. Wuh, wuh, you can make that sound.”

“Tech-no. Easy.”

“Wil. One syllable.”

Tommy’s head goes back and forth between the two of them as they insist upon their own name, and Phil has to hold back laughter at the way the kid looks so honestly baffled at what he’s being told. Like he can’t believe he’s being given so many things to do, and it’s all too much of a workload for his tiny little hands.

“Techno.”

“Wil.”

“Techno!”

“Wil!”

Tommy opens his mouth. Technoblade and Wilbur watch with an eager, now a little competitive, gaze...

He sneezes.

“Bless you.” Phil says offhandedly, snickering at the matching looks of disappointment on the twins’ faces.

“Fuck.” Wilbur huffs, crossing his arms over his chest.

“Fuck.” Tommy repeats. Everyone goes still.

Wilbur panics and slaps his hands to Tommy’s mouth, as if trying to cover the effect of his actions. Phil bursts into uncontrollable laughter, nearly collapsing in the hallway. Technoblade is torn between laughing along or teasing Wilbur for poorly influencing their darling little brother.

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The construction of the house is mostly finished within the next few months, just in time for the quickly approaching autumn weather. With sparse visits to the town for certain supplies and a persistence from the residential bickering couple, three more rooms are made upstairs.

Phil *expects* for the rooms to be sorted out evenly, with the boys getting their own bed and Tommy staying with him until he’s a bit bigger, but he’s quickly met with the confirmation that will likely not be happening when Techno and Wil explore around the empty space and ask what they’re going to do with the extra three rooms in the house.

“They’re not extra rooms, they’re your rooms. Although, one oughta be the guest room. That’ll probably be the one downstairs.” Phil hums, adjusting Tommy on his hip as he looks up and down the walls for anything out of order. For the most part, it looks well done. They’ll have to wait until it rains to be really sure, but for now, it’s perfect. An extension to their forever home. “Bad and Skeppy will probably use that one whenever they’re around.”

“Where are *they* going if they’re not staying here?” Wilbur asks, hanging off the doorframe with his fingers dug into the edges. He swings side to side with his chin tilted back in such a

way that Phil is a little worried he's going to knock his skull on the other side of the doorframe.

"Nowhere far. They just want a place of their own, that's all." Phil shrugs a shoulder as he glances out of the small window looking out into the forest. Tommy leans forward with him, wanting to see what's going on out there.

"When are we going to decorate?" Techno asks, eyeing the emptiness of the room with a near frown. "Where are we going to get furniture?"

"I could build a lot of what we might need." Phil smiles, turning away from the glass. "I've got good experience with fixing things up."

"I think you're gonna have to use your experience pretty soon. Uhm." Wilbur stands up straight with a guilty look, rubbing at the door frame like that'll undo the way he's nicked a few scratches into the wood with his nails. "I hurt the wall."

"Woww, and Skeppy and Bad *just* finished building it-" Techno teases, Wilbur flushing with a twitch of his fins.

"It was an accident!" He scrubs harder at the scratches, as if they're just dirt marks.

"*Wowwww... .*"

"It's okay, Wil." Phil chuckles, walking over to see the extent of the damage. Wilbur tries to cover it up with his arms as soon as he comes near, but he relents when Phil nudges him to the side, and slumps against the wall in the hallway with guilt.

It's really not too bad. Just careless nicks made in the wood, nothing to be angry about. Phil runs a fingertip over one of them and is reminded of the carvings he put into the other doorways downstairs. He gets an idea.

He places Tommy down on the floor, letting the kid run wild circles in the room, Technoblade half-heartedly chasing after him. “Wilbur, come here. Stand against the doorframe.”

“Why.” Wilbur mutters, still seeming upset over the fact he’s ruined the new part of their home.

“Because you’ve given me a brilliant idea.” Phil responds. Wil’s head lifts with curiosity. “Come here, come here.” Wil moves back into the room, letting Phil maneuver him so his back is pressed up against the doorframe. “Stand straight, nice and tall. No going on your toes, though.”

Wilbur smirks a little as he presses against Phil’s hand on the top of his head, trying to stretch a bit more to look bigger than he is. Phil pinches him gently on the nose, making him giggle, and as he stands straight again, Phil measures his height against the door and makes a new knick in the wood with his nails. He swipes along it twice, making sure it’s easy to see, then he lets Wil step away.

“Remind me, Wil, how old are you?” Phil asks, lifting a finger up beside the line to scratch out a number.

“Eleven.” Wilbur replies, although it's with a twinge of confusion for what exactly Phil’s doing.

“He’s ten.” Techno cuts in, heaving Tommy up in his arms as the kid kicks his feet up with a happy smile.

“Eleven!” Wilbur insists.

“Nine and half.” Technoblade nods, adjusting Tommy in his arms.

“Ten and half.” Wilbur bargains.

“Going nine.”

“Ten and a half!”

Phil barely holds back a fond laugh. “Boys. Your age isn’t something you can haggle over.”

“I’m haggling. I’m winning.” Technoblade leans back, Tommy pressing himself into the crook of his neck. “He’s nine now.”

“No!”

“And I’m eleven.”

“ *No* !”

“You’re both eleven, and not a minute apart.” Phil declares, Wil gaining a look of smug victory as Techno shares a disgruntled expression. “Now, Techno, your turn. Come stand against the doorway.” Phil says, as he scratches in a W beside the number 11.

“Why?” Techno asks, putting Tommy down, much to the toddler’s displeasure. He yells at Techno to be picked up again, and Wilbur quickly takes his place, swiping Tommy up off the ground and into his arms. Tommy’s satisfied enough with this, and is content to just snuggle into Wil’s neck.

“What are you even doing?” Wilbur asks, as Techno does the same as Wil, even rising up on his toes for a second only for Phil to nudge him back down.

“Scratching in lines for your height. I’m putting your age next to it, so that you can see how much taller you get after each one.” Phil explains, swiping through the wood again to make a mark of Techno’s height. “Ooh, you’re just a bit shorter, Techno.”

“What.” Technoblade twists around, looking at the drawn line with horror. It’s just a few inches below Wil’s. “No, you measured wrong!”

“Ha!” Wilbur jumps in victory, jostling Tommy in his arms with it. He gets a nasty glare from the baby for it.

“I did the exact same for Wil-”

“You made me short!”

Phil breaks out into a laugh, grabbing gently at Techno’s hands as he grasps at Phil’s shirt to try and demand that he right the wrong. “You’ll grow, mate. Give it time.”

“Wilbur stood on his toes.” Technoblade accuses, pointing a finger at him. Wilbur makes an offended gasp.

“No, I didn’t! You did!”

“Clearly not, if I’m shorter!”

“Well, you-”

“How about we measure Tommy now? See how much smaller he is compared to you both?” Phil butts in, effectively distracting both of them from their squabbling.

“We already know he’s small.” Wilbur informs, but he carries Tommy over anyway and puts him down, helping Phil to make the kid stand still against the doorframe and not run off into the hall. “He’s like a year old, isn’t he?”

“I’m fairly sure he’s two.” Phil says, making a mark in the wood with a lowercase t, so as to not get mixed up with Techno, who gets the uppercase T. “Can’t be entirely sure, considering I never caught when his day of birth was.”

As Phil leans back with his boys poking at the marks in the wood, chatting over how much higher they think the next line will be, he realizes that he...doesn’t know any of these kids’ birthdays. It’s through no fault of his own, honestly, the circumstances of their birth were stressful and unusual, and they’ve gotten by fine without that certain bit of information, but they *should* have birthdays, shouldn’t they? After all, it’s a day of celebration. For them. Something special and nice.

He’s fairly sure that’s what a birthday is. God, when’s the last time he’s celebrated his own? It seems like ages are far too vague underneath this roof.

“Do you boys want to pick a birthday?” Phil asks, both Techno and Wilbur stopping in their conversation to look up at him with surprise. “A day where you turn a number older every year? I don’t think any of us have one, and well, wouldn’t it be nice if we did?”

“Then we could have birthday parties.” Technoblade says, excitement sparking to life behind his eyes.

“Birthday parties?” Wilbur asks, furrowing his eyebrows together.

“To celebrate you getting older.” Phil says, pulling Wilbur in and giving a kiss on his head, Wilbur laughing and trying to push Phil away. “Only happens once a year, that! It’s got to be celebrated.”

“We can have one? A party?” Wilbur asks. “We can pick any day?”

“Any day. And then next year, on the same day, we’ll do it again.”

“Can I pick today?” Techno asks, a bit of hesitance creeping through his words. There’s an awkward smile playing on his lips. “Can we have a birthday party today?”

“If that’s what you want.”

“I want a party today.” Wilbur declares. “Can I have my birthday today, too?”

“If you both don’t mind sharing.” Phil glances at Techno, who gives a good nod to Wil’s questioning look.

“What about Tommy? What about his birthday!? Can it also be today?”

“I don’t see why not.”

“Happy birthday.” Technoblade says, leaning down to the toddler sitting on the floor. Tommy looks up at him with a slow blink, then laughs with a smile. “You’re the birthday baby.”

“And you’re both the birthday boys.” Phil grins, kissing Wilbur on the temple again, then wrangling Techno closer to give him one too. “Come on, let’s go downstairs. See if we can convince Bad to make a cake for you all.”

“Cake, cake!” Wilbur yells, throwing his hands up and running towards the stairs. Technoblade chases right after him, laughing eagerly. Phil carries Tommy up off the ground into his arms, and follows with a warm hum.

Later, while they sit in the living room, listening to the background noise of Bad scolding Skeppy over his poor assistance in baking, alongside the sound of metal clanging together and a few eggs breaking, Wil and Techno fall back into their haggling of ages, except this time it isn’t over their own age, but rather Tommy’s.

“One and half.”

“Two.”

“One and three quarters.”

“Two and a quarter.”

“One and three quarters and a half.”

“That’s not an age, Wil.” Phil huffs. “Use months, if you want to narrow it down that much, but you’re both wrong, he’s two, end of story.”

“He doesn’t look like a two year old. I mean, look at him. Look at those ominously glowing eyes.” Technoblade waves a hand over, and Tommy swivels his head, blinking with said eerie looking eyes. “I think he might be three, Dad.”

“He’s two, and you’re both eleven, and no more haggling on your ages.”

“But that’s no funnnn!” Wilbur whines. “How even old are *you* ?!”

“Guess.”

Both Wilbur and Techno share a look. They cross their arms. “Fourty.”

Phil shrugs with a smile.

“Fifty?”

He shrugs again.

“...Sixty?”

“He’s not wrinkly.” Wilbur protests.

“Still older.” Phil grins.

“What?!”

“Ninety.” Technoblade guesses, but there’s something uncertain with it, like he’s sure the number is higher, but he doesn’t want to accept that.

“Mmn. No. Higher, probably.”

“How old are you?!” Wilbur demands.

“Honestly?” Phil taps a finger upon his necklace, then breaks out into a small laugh. “I have no idea.”

“Then this is rigged.” Technoblade decides, leaning back with a shake of his head. “You’re one hundred now. It’s decided. And it’s your birthday, too. Happy birthday.”

“Birthday dad.” Wilbur claps his hands together.

“Birthday boys.” Phil claps his hands back, and Tommy mimics them both, clapping his hands along.

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Nothing much changes with the declaration of a birthday.

Technoblade doesn’t feel any older, (nor taller, despite his efforts in stretching when no one is looking) and he feels like by the time the next birthday rolls around, he’ll feel exactly the same in every single way.

Phil assures him that he will grow, though. If not in height, then in strength, if not in strength, then in knowledge, and if not in knowledge, then at the very least, in experience. He’s bound to hold onto something for the coming months, and Technoblade focuses on that hope.

He keeps consistent with his sword fighting, sparring out in the grass, chasing away the chattering in his head that cries for a good, fun fight. For the most part, they’re sated. Content with Techno staying vigilant with his weapon, satisfied with the fact they’re somewhere safe and all the threats are gone.

Techno likes to think he’s got the hang of his voices, now. He feels quite sure he understands them, or at least how they work. They crave entertainment, action. Sometimes a loud bickering back and forth with Wilbur will do. Sometimes the weight of a sword in his palm is needed. Either way, Technoblade delivers, and they relent. Never enough to go completely silent, but it’s something.

Sometimes, he wonders why such voices decided to live in his head. Why his head, and not any others? He’s asked Phil, asked Wilbur, even watched Tommy carefully for any instance of him having the same, but there’s nothing ever remotely similar there. They have their thoughts, their worries, their internal dialogue, but it is nothing compared to the conversation in Technoblade’s head, scattered and wild and random.

Phil once said it might be a lingering effect of the nether, for Technoblade's birthplace was a harsh, brutal environment, and the voices were meant to...guide him? For the expectation of dangers. Techno thought that sounded reasonable, except for the fact chat is godawful at agreeing upon anything. They'll come together for a common goal of watching a fight, or for expressing love to his family, but other than that? It's chaos. Entirely chaos.

So he doesn't expect anything helpful from their chattering, and only sometimes listens to their pleas so that they'll calm down and not fill his ears with yelling that would rival even Tommy's tantrums.

It's a cool afternoon with the sun hiding behind scattered clouds when he's met with something different, for once. He's sparring against Phil, the two of them hitting their swords together and trying to get the other to step farther and farther back. Phil goes easy on him, he always does, but Technoblade can never manage to get a win regardless. Try as he might, with all his lessons at the forefront of his mind, Phil's just better with a sword, and has far, far more experience under his belt.

It's still good fun, though. Technoblade laughs and sweats and dodges away, and chat is giving their usual cheer, encouraging him on the back of his mind. By the time the fight is done, his hand swiftly disarmed, Phil cackling fondly as Techno faceplants into the grass in exhaustion, chat has simmered down into whispers, at ease.

Phil walks away to retrieve Techno's sword, and Technoblade sits up with his arms stretched out to the sky, hearing faint words in his ears of how he's so incredibly cool, no he sucks, actually, he's making great progress, Phil was cheating, if he just had a *way* bigger sword, then- *BEHIND YOU!*

Technoblade's eyes go wide as they all ring together in one panicked warning, and he throws himself to the side, rolling away on the ground and seeing Phil make a failed swipe at where he was just a second before. He looks surprised at how quickly Techno moved, a little disappointed that he couldn't grab him in a surprise hug to tease him a bit, and that surprise melts into slight concern when he sees the raw shock written across Techno's face.

"You guys can actually be *useful*!?" Techno yells, and Phil makes a baffled expression.

"What?"

“Not you.” Techno holds a hand up, pressing the other to his head. “When did this happen?! You’ve-” Technoblade expects a response, but that moment of clear communication seems to be all they can manage for the day, because they all scatter into their usual chattering again, with a dozen different opinions and reactions and- okay, Techno’s disregarding their input now, they’ve gone back to buzzing mode.

Phil questions what the strange reaction was all about, and Techno considers, then waves it off as chat’s usual antics, insisting on another round to move the topic away.

The truth is, the concept of chat actually seeming to unify underneath something else for once was- interesting. They warned him. He hadn't even heard Phil come near, too focused on the voices themselves, but they saw it coming. They saw it coming, despite Techno being totally unaware. Does that mean they know more than what they let on? Or are they just much better at taking in Techno’s surroundings, and they usually never talk about it?

He decides to test it further.

The next day, he asks Wilbur to do a favor for him. They start up a game where Wilbur, when he can, will try to sneak up on Technoblade, and for every time he successfully catches him off guard, he wins a point. If Technoblade manages to spot what he’s doing before he can do it, though, then he wins a point. What’s the prize for this point system? They don’t know, they didn’t think that far ahead. But the idea of bragging rights is motivation enough.

Wil finds the idea of such a game to be irresistible, especially with the freedom of being able to jump on Techno with little to no repercussions. He easily agrees, an evil, menacing glint in his eyes as he gives the excuse that he wants to learn to be sneaky, anyway, and this is the perfect opportunity.

So they go on with their day. They help dad out with painting upstairs, putting color to the walls while he puts detail into the dried corners. They watch over Tommy and frantically try to stop him when the kid becomes dead set on overcoming the descent of stairs all by himself. They listen to Bad and Skeppy argue about cooking abilities in the kitchen, their knowledge on the matter seeming to lay in dramatically different points.

By mid-day, Techno honestly almost forgets about the game entirely, and when he does recall about it, he has an off-handed thought on if such a game would even really work out, since he and Wilbur tend to be at each other's side so often anyway. And if they're not each other's side, then they're at their father's side, or at Tommy's side, and it would be hard for Wilbur to get the jump on Techno if Technoblade is actively busy with something, or holding Tommy in his arms, or-

The pondering over these logistics are interrupted as suddenly his head shrieks all together in a panic, telling him that something is behind him.

Instead of dodging away, he turns, bracing himself with his knees bent and his feet flat to the floor, but it's a futile effort. Wilbur screams with both surprise and mild disappointment as he crashes into Technoblade, and they both tip and fall onto the ground in a tumble of limbs.

When the non-existent dust has settled, and they're laying still with an assurance that nothing's broken, Techno raises a finger up into the air with a winning smile.

"Point for me." He says, and Wilbur lifts his head with a bitter scowl.

"Oh, goddammit." He mutters. "Next time, next time! I was too loud..." He crawls off of Techno and insists he'll succeed on the next surprise attack, but Technoblade doesn't really have much faith in his abilities. After all, it seems like Techno's now discovered a way to never be snuck up on, chat working in his favor.

This might be considered cheating. Might be pretty unfair, actually.

...nahhh. Techno's just using his devices at hand, fair and square. It's not *his* fault Wilbur doesn't have the same.

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Winter comes quietly and with a deep chill.

The temperature drops with each passing night, and frankly, Technoblade drops with it. It gets harder and harder for Phil to drag him out of bed in the mornings, Techno whining and pleading to be given just a few more extra minutes.

Phil's not ashamed to say he has a weak heart to his children. He sees Technoblade half-asleep, curled up underneath three blankets in their mess of a bed (more a nest, really, at this point. They managed to move a bigger mattress into the room upstairs, and from there, with more and more additions of pillows and blankets, it has become a nest. Phil has no complaints for it) and he cannot help but give in to the urge to squeeze his arms around his boy and take a few more minutes to enjoy the start of the morning.

Wilbur has no issue with waking up to the cold. He practically bounces out of bed with a spring in his step, and he's often running out to the front porch without so much as socks on his feet to protect him from the elements. He just lifts his face to the frigid air and breathes in like it all contains so much more life than one could comprehend.

Then either Bad or Phil will wrangle him inside and fret about hypothermia, and he will complain and whine just as much as Technoblade waking up.

The cold keeps them all inside more often than the summer days. (Save for Wilbur, who seems to want to go out whenever the chance presents itself.) With the constant close proximity and the calm, nearly dull events of the day, it's not hard for Phil to take notice of the little things.

Namely, Technoblade beginning to nap quite a bit.

It's not a grand thing, at first. The winter days have come, so the inside of the house becomes cozy with the fireplace, and being swaddled in comfortable blankets is plenty of reason enough for the kid to conk out on the couch a couple times a week. Phil finds it more endearing than anything and he tucks him in when he can.

But as the winter crawls on, and the days with it, Techno's energy is sapped away. He's quieter, most afternoons. Wilbur holds their energy for the two of them, carrying the conversation or leading the way or just holding up the book while Techno half-heartedly

reads out the words with a tired voice, his cheek leaning onto Wil's shoulder. Phil has half a mind to be worried, to think of it to be sickness, or anything else along those lines, but with consistent check ups and discussing the matter with Bad and Skeppy, they all agree that Technoblade appears to be healthy. Sleepy, and unenthusiastic with the cold, but healthy.

It is on the day of the first snow when it really hits. Phil wakes up to white covering his lawn, and while Technoblade snoozes on without a care in the world, Wilbur's falling over his feet to get to the window and have a look for himself.

"It's snowing." He tells Phil, mouth open in a gasp, eyes wide with wonder. He stands on his toes and leans in close to the glass, his breath fogging it up. "It's- It's snow!"

Phil smiles, sitting up with Tommy rested against his chest, a bit awake, but not enough to want to go running off into the hallway anytime soon. He looks down at Techno, who is barely visible past the layers of blankets he's buried himself under, determined to escape this snowfall. Only a bit of his hair poking out, a scrap of pink amongst the brown, cream colors of their blankets.

"Is Techno awake? He has to see this!" Wilbur says, wiping at the window to get rid of the fog his breath has made. It leaves smears at his fingertips, and he leans in close again, nose nearly touching the window.

"He's probably going to sleep in today." Phil responds, tugging at the covers to check on Techno's sleeping face. His expression is nothing but tranquil, so Phil lets him be. He's been too sensitive to the cold lately. Or maybe he just looks sensitive compared to Wilbur, who is two seconds away from climbing out the window to head outside. "Shoes and sweater, songbird." Phil reminds, and Wil makes a grumpy face in his direction.

"Really?"

"You really think I'm letting you go out there barefoot? You'll freeze a toe off."

"I do like my toes." Wilbur notes, and he rushes to get a thick sweater on and to tug on his shoes. By the time Phil's pulled on a sweater of his own and bundled Tommy up to hang on

his chest, Wilbur's out the door, down the stairs and at the front porch. Phil can hear his excited giggling from the window, and he hopes Wilbur will be able to be thawed out by the fireplace before breakfast.

Once he's put on his shoes, Phil adjusts the cloth carrying Tommy and moves over to the bed, pulling back the blankets just enough so he can press a small kiss onto Technoblade's brow.

"I'll wake you up when Wil's tired himself out, yeah?" Phil whispers, and Technoblade snores quietly with no response. Phil tucks him back in and heads out into the hallway, Tommy being talkative in his hold.

"Babababa." He says, fisting his hands into the fabric of Phil's sweater.

"Baa, baa." Phil responds, Tommy looking up at him with wide eyes, like he's spoken terrible secrets that he should've only been able to speak. "What's in your head, little lamb?"

"Baahh." Tommy says, now mimicking Phil and truly sounding like a baby lamb. "Bam, bam."

"I see. The stakes are high." Phil says with amusement on his tongue, and he reaches the bottom of his steps with Bad lingering by the front door, looking slightly worried. Skeppy's leaning against his back with a drowsy look, his arms wrapped around the other's waist so he won't fully slump all the way to the floor.

"Your kid is going to turn into an icicle." Skeppy mutters, Phil raising his eyebrows in question.

"Wilbur!" Bad calls, a hand held beside his mouth. "Put your sweater back on!"

Wil's laughter is the only thing that's given in response. Phil's fatherly concern rises up in his chest.

“He took it off?” Phil asks, and he squeezes past Bad to step out onto the porch, seeing that indeed, Wilbur’s abandoned his sweater to the ground, and is now rolling around in the snow without a single care in the world. He looks ridiculous, with all the bits of white sticking to his hair and clothes, and Phil can’t help but admire the sight for a second, overcome with love.

Then he’s overcome with parental instincts and he stalks across the lawn to scold Wil appropriately. “Wilbur!”

“Dad, look!” Wilbur sits up on his knees with a toothy grin, grabbing a handful of snow within his palm and throwing it up into the air. It all falls back down in scattered pieces, and he squeals with delight, leaning back and falling back into the snow.

“Wil!” Phil calls again, coming near and kneeling down in front of his son, pulling Wil to sit up again so that he can look directly up at him. His skin is frigid to the touch, enough that a harsh strike of worry hits Phil’s heart. He leans close and reaches his wings forward, trying to block out the cold air around them and bring some warmth to Wilbur.

“What?” Wilbur asks, and he makes a surprise noise when black-feathered wings curl around him. “Ah-! Dad!”

“Aren’t you cold?!” Phil asks, pressing a palm to Wil’s face, cradling his cheek. Wilbur blinks up at him, leaning into it.

“You’re warm.”

“You’re *freezing* . Why did you take off your sweater?”

“Because I couldn’t feel the snow with it.” Wilbur answers simply, like this is an obvious thing to consider. “I’m fine, dad. I feel fine!” He whines, trying to scoot away from Phil’s wings around him.

“You’re not cold?” Phil asks, taking Wil’s hand and rubbing his palm against his freezing fingers.

“No.” Wilbur sounds a little offended to be asked such a thing. “It’s just fresh out here. Reminds me of when I go swimming in the river. You should bring Techno out!”

Phil frowns a bit, not entirely convinced with his words, but as Wil draws lines through the snow, flicking bits of it off his claws, a small realization dawns on him.

“You’re not cold.” He says, and Wilbur very nearly rolls his eyes. Phil clicks at him as a light scolding. Wil just smiles a little. “You’re immune to the cold.” Phil lets his wings fall away.

“Am I?” Wilbur questions, piling snow onto his lap, like he’s trying to bury his legs in it. “It’s just really nice.”

“Mate, if I was rolling around in the snow like you were, I’d be half frozen by now.” Phil smiles, placing a hand on the back of Tommy’s head. “You’re not even shivering.” He realizes further, something of wonder in his tone. “That’s incredible.”

Wilbur shrinks a bit at the praise, making a crooked little smile. “I mean- it’s not cold.”

“To you, I bet. To us-” Phil pauses. “Oh, Techno.” He breathes out, looking back at the house.

“What?” Wilbur asks, scared by the tone.

“No, it’s alright. I think I just understand why your brother’s been so insistent on trying to burrow himself into the blankets every morning.”

Wilbur scrunches his nose in thought. “He just doesn’t like being cold. He told me.”

“I think it’s more that he can’t handle it like we do.” Phil stands up from the ground, Tommy waving an arm in an effort to say hi to Wilbur. “Like how you were in the summer. You hated being in the sun.”

“Yeah, because it was melting my skin off!” Wilbur insists, fins shifting as he grimaces at the idea. “I told you, I was turning into a puddle.”

“I think I understand now.” Phil smiles. “I’m sorry, mate. Next time summer rolls around, I’ll take you to the river more often, okay? Then we can make sure you won’t melt.” Phil kicks up a bit of snow at Wilbur, and Wil blocks it with his arms, giggling. “You keep playing in the snow. I’m going to check on Techno.”

“Does this mean I can take my shoes off?” Wilbur asks as Phil turns and walks back to the house.

“Either you keep your shoes, or you put on your sweater, one or the other. You’re worrying me enough with the way you’re turning into an icicle.”

Wilbur laughs with an evil little smile, and with a dramatic show of falling back into the snow, he continues rolling around across the ground, periodically throwing handfuls of it into the air.

Phil makes his way back to the porch, untying the cloth wrapped around Tommy to keep him close so that he can pass the little menace over to Bad. “Take him for a bit, will you? Wil’s fine, another little quirk of his; he can handle the cold. I’m going to see how Techno’s doing, though, because I don’t think he can do the same.”

“Want us to heat up a bit of tea for him?” Bad asks, adjusting Tommy to lay against his shoulder and wrapping the cloth around him so he can hang there without the help of Bad’s arms.

“If you can. Keep an eye on Wil, though.”

Bad nods, then looks behind him at where Skeppy is still clinging to his back. “Skeppy, go heat up some tea.”

“Urrhghgbhg.” Skeppy responds. It’s somehow said with sass. Phil rolls his eyes with a smile as he goes up the stairs, hearing a light argument between the two.

His steps are purposefully silent as he goes down the hall, and as he steps through the door, he notes that there’s still a sort of chill that sticks to the walls inside. The fire downstairs needs to be fed more wood, if the house is going to stay comfortably warm for his son.

Phil closes the door gently behind him with a click, and he toes off his shoes to make his way over to the bed. He has to search through the blankets for a minute to find his boy, and when he does see him, he’s still knocked out cold, curled up on his side with his face half pressed into a squished pillow.

“Good morning, Techno.” Phil whispers out, and Techno hardly stirs. Phil climbs onto the mattress and sits beside him, pushing away the blankets so that he can pull Technoblade to him, resting his head against his shoulder.

The movement disturbs him a bit, and Techno gives an unconscious grip onto Phil’s sleeve, but he goes limp again within the next few seconds, his breathing still slow and easy. Phil wraps his arms around him and curls his wings over him too, for good measure, then leans in and tries to wake him up.

“Techno?” He says gently, and Technoblade doesn’t even twitch. “Technoblade. Wake up. Try as you might, you can’t sleep the whole day away.” He shakes Techno a bit, then reaches to grab a blanket beside him and drape it over Techno’s legs. Technoblade shifts his head with a huff, and Phil shakes him again. “Come on, mate.”

“No.” Technoblade murmurs, sinking into Phil’s arms, knowing at the back of his mind that it is somewhere safe to be.

“Yes, yes.” Phil chuckles, nudging Techno in the side. He gets an annoyed noise for his efforts. “You’ve got to wake up for a bit, I want to ask you something.”

“No.” Techno tries to shove his face into the crook of Phil’s neck. Phil has to wrangle him back to get him to tilt his face up. “ *No* .” Technoblade mutters up at him, his eyes squinting.

“Hi.” Phil greets. Technoblade’s lips curl into the most upset frown he’s ever seen. “Oh, you’re just so unhappy, aren’t you?”

“Yes.”

“So sorry.” Phil smiles, not sounding very sorry. “You awake?”

“Mhm.” Technoblade closes his eyes, then opens them again with a bleary look. “I’m up.”

“Doesn’t seem like it, honestly.” Phil teases, but he relents. “For how long has the cold been really bothering you?”

Techno processes the question for a moment, then tilts his head with a sort of confusion, eyebrows furrowing together. “It doesn’t...bother me?”

“No?” Phil asks.

“No.” Techno’s eyes fall shut again. “I’m tired. Can I go back to sleep?”

“You’ve got to tell me if the cold is making you uncomfortable, mate. It’s good to know.”

“It’s not, it’s not-” He breaks out into a yawn, long and heavy. “It’s just. Sleepy.”

“Sleepy.” Phil repeats, unable to keep the amused smile off his face. Techno doesn’t seem to notice though.

“I want to sleep. Please?” Technoblade cracks his eyes open again, and Phil sighs, unable to refuse his drowsy little face. He tucks Techno back underneath his chin, and Technoblade melts into him, humming for a moment before seemingly drifting off.

“Skeppy’s making some tea for you downstairs. You’ll have to wake up in a bit to at least eat something.”

“Kay.” Technoblade agrees, then he promptly falls back to sleep. Phil rests his cheek on top of his head with a long sigh. It’s fond.

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The rest of the winter goes the same. Technoblade half-asleep, barely coherent when actually awake, and absolutely grumpy when faced with the cold. Wilbur tries once and only once to get him to join him outside to play in the snow, and when he’s met with a stern refusal, he takes it with grace and cuddles up at Techno’s side for the morning, sleeping in while snowfall sits outside their window.

Phil can only assume that the sleeping habits are some sort of...hibernation. Techno’s netherborn, it’s an absolute fact, considering his immunity to fire, his piglin traits. Winter doesn’t exist in the nether. *Snow* doesn’t exist in the nether. When faced with it here, Technoblade’s body just decides to not deal with it, and instead sleeps it out until spring comes.

It’s a bit worrying to Phil’s heart, at first. Technoblade starts to sleep entire days away without any trouble at all, and part of him wants to shake the boy until he sits up and is wide awake and okay, but he seriously doubts that’s actually going to get him anywhere. Instead, he rests with Techno when he can. Carries him from the bed to the couch and from the couch to the bed, so that he’s not cooped up in the room all week. He makes sure Techno wakes up

for meals, brushes through his hair while he's drowsily sitting up. He cares for him, watches over him, and waits patiently for the winter to end so that Technoblade can actually hold a decent conversation and explain what exactly the cold does to him, how it feels. Maybe then, next year, Phil can do better, get ahead of it.

Wilbur helps out when he can. He plays with Tommy more often than not, taking him outside under supervision and bundled up so they can play in the snow together. He's careful about making sure Tommy doesn't get too cold, aware that he himself can't quite recognize when they've been out too long. He helps with cooking whenever he's allowed, he tidies up the bed when Technoblade actually leaves it. And when Techno's asleep underneath the covers, he joins him there with a book, reading aloud in case Techno can still hear him and wants to follow along. He's not quite as good at it as Technoblade is, but it's enough, and he goes to Phil if he ever has trouble with specific words.

It's during the later part of the winter when another change hits them again, on Wilbur's side this time. He wakes up with a jolt, in the middle of the night, with a pounding in his ears. It's consistent and calm, much like a heartbeat, but it's overlapped, like it's not just one.

When goes to wake up Phil, the shuffle of the blankets makes him flinch, and the sound of his own breathing is far too loud. He kicks Phil awake with both his hands over his ears, and Phil sits up to the sight of tears on Wil's face, his fins twitching with every movement within the room, within the house, within the very forest.

It's a long night, from there on. Wilbur mostly blocks it all out, face shoved into his knees as he digs his palms against his ears, trying to muffle the way the world has crawled into head and taken up all the space there. Phil whispers and steps quietly to get help from Skeppy and Bad, but Wil hears every single movement, every word and every heartbeat their chest gives. It's only when Skeppy gets the bright idea of sticking makeshift earplugs into his ears when everything lessens, enough to let Wilbur breathe, and then cry harder from the sheer overstimulation of it all.

Phil holds him through the night. Tommy begins to cry with Wil, loud wailing sobs that makes Wilbur's head hurt, so Bad and Skeppy take the kid for the night, and with his crying being taken downstairs, it's manageable. Wilbur passes out at some point during the sunrise, and when he wakes, it's better. Not good, not enough for him to dare take out the earplugs, but it's better. He tells Phil what he thinks is going on, and all the adults eye each other in that way where they're communicating something Wilbur doesn't get.

“Let’s give it time.” Phil only says, in a hushed tone that’s careful and concerned. “I think this is just another part of you growing up. Like your healing?”

“Healing.” Wilbur repeats, staring down at Techno’s sleeping face. He’s snoring. Maybe it’s not as loud as it seems to Wil, but he’s surely snoring. “Now I get- hearing?”

“Hearing.” Phil confirms. “That’s what it looks like, at least.”

“I don’t like it.” Wilbur snuffles. “Make it stop.”

“I can’t, songbird.” Phil brushes a hand over his head, holding him tighter. “I’m sure it’ll get easier over the week. Just hold out, okay?”

Wilbur squeezes his eyes shut, but he nods.

He holds out. He keeps the earplugs in and sleeps as much as he can, and feels gratitude for the way the entire house doesn’t speak in anything more than a whisper for the whole time. Even Bad and Skeppy do their little argument in a hushed tone, and Wilbur can still hear it from all the way upstairs, but it’s not painful anymore. Just more funny, if anything.

He tries focusing on certain things, to ward off the way everything closes in on him when he’s not paying attention. He focuses on the conversation in the house, on the way Phil makes small talk with Bad and Skeppy, and how the three of them discuss dinner with a boring tone. He focuses on Techno’s breathing beside him, his light snoring shifting over the hours, almost changing in pitch, at times.

He focuses on heartbeats. Phil’s specifically. It’s always a calm, steady one, and for that, Wil finds it to be his favorite. He’s always easy to pick out amongst all the noise, and it’s always soothing for the rough parts of the night, when he can hear the rustling of leaves outside and every creak within the house.

A week after his hearing becomes dialed up, Wilbur hears something very new.

He hears a voice. It doesn't belong to anyone he knows. It's soft, and whispered, and almost fading, like the sound is struggling to reach even Wil's ears.

He gets up from bed at the late of night, hearing this voice. Phil dozes on with Techno and Tommy next to him, and Wilbur slowly creeps out from the blankets, stepping onto the floorboards with a wince at how loud the squeaks of them are. Then he realizes he may be the only one hearing that squeak, and he walks a bit more easily.

The voice calls out again. It's a blurred thing, and Wil can't tell what it's saying. It seems insistent, though, nearly frantic, and for that, Wilbur doesn't want to ignore it.

He goes out of the room. Makes his way down the hallway, tiptoes down the stairs, biting his lip with every little noise he makes, sure that'll wake the whole house up and he'll be asked as to why he's out of bed. He's not sure how he would answer.

The living room is silent and dark, and Wilbur knows Skeppy and Bad are in their own room, seemingly sleeping for once. Or maybe they're just resting, enjoying the quiet of the night. He can't be sure. Either way, he carefully goes over to the front door, and twists the doorknob as slowly as he can bear. It clicks, and it opens, and he slips outside into the freezing cold.

It's not very bad, tonight. There's no howling wind or harsh snowfall, but there's still snow scattered around, and the air is frigid. Wilbur breathes it in with something of relief, glad to feel the cold against his skin.

The voice calls out again. Whispering, singing, echoing.

Wilbur moves off the porch, going onto the lawn with bare feet. It doesn't bother him, if anything, it's actually rather nice. He looks around to see if there's anyone standing in the moonlight, but there's nothing but the trees.

It's somewhere past the trees.

Phil's told them to never go exploring without him, though. He doesn't want them to get lost, and Wilbur wouldn't really like to lose his way in the forest, either. He takes a step back and means to turn around and sneak back inside, but the voice calls out again.

It sounds like a woman. A whisper of a woman's voice.

"Hello?" Wilbur says, looking in the direction where he thinks it may have come from.

*Hello, hello, hello....* She seems to echo his own words back at him. It should be creepy. Wilbur finds a strange type of comfort in the sound of it, though. Like it's familiar.

He goes towards the forest. He steps past the treeline, walks through a layer of soft snow on his feet, keeps walking as that single hello continues repeating out, like a siren call.

"Are you over here?" Wilbur asks, slowing in his steps, looking over his shoulder.

*Over here, over here, over here...*

Wilbur follows her guidance. He needs to see who this is, needs to see where it's coming from. It's not like a normal person, not like a normal voice. It's too- vast. It drifts too much with the breeze, echoes too far around the trees.

Wil steps over a root and squints through the dark, and finds the light of the moon streaming down to show a tiny clearing of sorts. There's flowers poking through a layer of snow, resilient and stubborn, and they're beautiful. They're all sorts of colors, all scattered around, and Wil follows the sight of them until he's caught on one single thing.

A gravestone.

Confusion floods through him, and before he can think further, he hears Phil calling out behind him, yelling loud through the night.

“WILBUR!” He screams, frantic and worried, and Wilbur books it back home, sprinting through the trees with all he’s got. “WIL!?”

“Here, here!” Wilbur yells out, holding his hands up, breaking out from the treeline. “I’m here, I’m okay-!”

“Wilbur!” Phil cries, rushing to him and yanking him into a bone-crushing hug. He kneels down on the snow and holds Wilbur tight, then pushes him back to hold him by the shoulders, a burning look in his eyes. “Where were you?! Why weren’t you in bed, why did you-”

“I-” Wilbur fumbles to talk underneath such a gaze. “I was just-” His eyes drift to the trees, to the snow scattered around their roots, and Phil clicks at him, making him swivel his head right back. “I heard a bird.”

“A bird?” Phil repeats, baffled.

“It was hurt.” Wilbur lies. He’s lying, lying through his teeth, but he can’t admit to the voice. He can’t talk about it, can’t say it. He needs to figure it out some more. “I was hearing it cry, in the forest, and I think it was dying, and I didn’t want to just leave it-!”

“Wilbur.” Phil’s expression goes soft, but there’s still a stern worry in his eyes. “I understand. I get it, but don’t *scare* me like that. Wake me up next time, I won’t mind going out with you.”

“I’m sorry.” Wil’s lips shake, tears welling up in his eyes. He can’t bear this tone in his father’s voice. It’s too much. He almost confesses about the woman’s voice right there. “I’m-sorry, sorry-”

“Shhh.” Phil pulls him in again, wrapping his arms around him and holding him close. “You just worried me, baby. It won’t happen again, yeah? You just have to wake me up next time, that’s all.”

“I will. I- I won’t do it again.”

“I know. You’re alright.” Phil rubs a hand over the back of his shoulder, and he presses a kiss to the side of his head. “Do you still hear the bird?”

“....no.”

“Oh, my songbird.” Phil says sympathetically, taking that as a sign that the fake bird has died. He stands and picks up Wil with him, lifting him with a grunt and wrapping a wing forward to keep the cold off, even if it doesn’t bother him. “Let’s go back inside, yeah? We’re okay. It’s okay.”

Wilbur nods with his arms around Phil’s neck. As Phil turns, he can’t help but spare a glance to the forest, the shadows underneath the trees looking far too dark.

## Chapter End Notes

the boys are growing. they are growing. and the plot is plotting. it's very much plotting.

also the World Ending Powers are kinda starting to kick in, Phil has so much work ahead of him lmao these boys are gonna be so very powerful

thanks for reading thanks for waiting you're all so very patient and I love the Boys weeps and sobs and weeps also skephalo are totally husbands here anyway leave a comment if you want have a good day byeee

## to grow

### Chapter Notes

someone somewhere got a whole mini heart attack by the notif from this chapter. Please don't skip your classes to read this (says the guy who has skipped classes to WRITE this)

No I'm not dead. Follow my Tumblr I chat so much, guys. Get a peek into my very loud mind.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The whisper in the wind doesn't return for a long time after that.

Wilbur tries to wait for it for a few nights after, staying up late with his eyes to the window as he sits by his brother's side. He tunes out the noise of his family's gentle snores, tries to catch any sort of singing song echoing past the walls. It never comes. She doesn't return.

He wonders if he was dreaming it. If he was hearing nothing and making up a voice in his head, but there was also that gravestone he had seen. That was real, wasn't it? The image of it haunts him a little, puts a sense of dread deep into his heart. Why would there be a grave out in their forest? Phil's never mentioned one. Unless he was dreaming that up, too?

What if he was sleepwalking? Maybe- he went out into the snow, his brain giving an odd set of dreams, and he woke up when his dad came calling for him.

But what if it was real? What if there is a woman's voice out there, singing, calling, whispering in the wind?

There's a part of Wil that wants to tell Phil about what he's witnessed, but he isn't sure he would have the words to put it right. Disbelief sinks into him with each silent night passing by, and he starts to second-guess whatever it was that he might've heard. The only thing that stays consistent in his fuzzy memory is the image of the gravestone, and he just-

He doesn't want to think about that. Doesn't want to let his head drift into the concept of death, of being buried into the dirt. It makes him think of the worst years when he was smaller, and it makes his heart squeeze tight in a fear that's managed to finally leave him alone.

He stops staying up late at night. He pushes himself into his father's arms, huddles into his chest like he's trying to hide away from the world outside. Here, so close, Phil's heartbeat is the only thing thrumming in his ears, drowning everything else out. Here, the only thing Wilbur has to worry about is Tommy's kicking feet trying to attack his leg and Phil's feathers smothering him when he gets to clinging too tightly.

He tries to leave the whisper in the wind to where it came.

He tries to simply forget.

She doesn't mind. She'll wait for as long as she needs.

---

When the end of winter comes by, logically, Wilbur supposes he should find a sense of disappointment in it. After all, he finds so much joy within the snow, so much happiness in the cold breeze that sinks into his skin whenever he steps outside. It's like the air is stronger in his lungs, his mind clearer against the soft howl of wind to his ears. Sometimes it feels almost too good to be his. Sometimes he feels like it's all a dream, and he never wants to wake up.

It's just- he's never had the chance to *live* like this, to take in the world around him with such-ease. It's so *easy* to be careless now. It's so simple to not worry, because the threats are gone. The worst is done. Home is here, and now the biggest problems Wil ever has to worry about

are squabbles with his brother that sometimes get out of hand. And even then, when that gets a bit much, Phil fixes it. He fixes everything.

(Wilbur thinks his dad might be the strongest person in the world, sometimes. The only reason he isn't entirely convinced of it is because he's seen his father fall before. But then again, the circumstances within that forest were different. Things were unfair. He *made* his father fall.

He won't do it ever again, he's sure of that, so therefore, Phil won't ever fall once more.)

Life is kinder now, with all of them together. The days are calm as they pass, nothing of note. The weather, slowly, creeps into something warmer, the ice thawing out to usher in a sweet spring.

Wilbur waits on it impatiently.

He likes the snow, he does. He *loves* the winter, it's really quite wonderful. But he misses his brother most of all.

He wants the winter to end, because he wants his brother back.

Technoblade still sleeps for the majority of the time. Hibernation, Phil calls it, but Wilbur doesn't care much about whatever the right name might be. He's sleeping. For far too long. After such a long while with the weeks going by, Wilbur's compliance with the sleeping has turned into annoyance.

He wants Techno back. He wants the conversation, the arguing, the witty banter again. All he gets these days is the sound of snoring and grabby hands clinging to his shirt during the mornings. It's nice, he supposes. It makes it easy to hold onto his brother, hug him close with all the love he has, but it's boring. *Boring*. So boring.

Wilbur is going to die of boredom before Technoblade ever gets up.

“When are you waking up?” Wilbur whispers to Techno one morning, Phil downstairs with Tommy, Bad and Skeppy outside trying to gather wood. (Emphasis on the *trying*, because they’ve gotten distracted in arguing again. Wilbur can hear Bad’s retort despite the distance and the walls- “*Well at least I can actually carry the logs-!*” and Skeppy’s near shrieking reply- “*You’re like twice the size of me! Of course you can!*”) )

Technoblade doesn’t give much answer to Wil’s question. He’s serene in his slumber, laid on his side with the pillows piled around him, blanket pulled over his shoulders. His ear flicks a little as Wilbur leans in close, his breath disturbing Techno as he makes a dramatic huff.

“When are you waking *up* ?” Wil whispers again, more intensely, the words practically being poured into Techno’s ear, which flicks again at Wil’s insistence. “It’s not even that much winter anymore. The snow is gone. The flowers aren’t really up yet, dad says that’ll be later-”

Techno’s face twitches a bit with Wilbur’s rambling put right up to his ear. He’s still asleep, but it’s not a deep sleep, not with this noise annoying him.

“-but the birds have come back. I kinda hear them sometimes.” Wilbur pauses, thinking about how long it’s been now since Techno’s fallen asleep, and how much he’s truly missed. He’s been so caught up in the mindset of ‘*he’ll be up soon*’ that he never considered how far soon really was. Is it up to him now, to keep his twin in the know?

“Tommy has been saying more words. Kinda.” He decides to start with, laying down on his elbows, now just resting next to Techno, rather than hovering right over him. “Dad’s been trying to get him to say ‘dad’, but he’s really interested in saying ‘pot’ instead. Which is weird, because I don’t even know where he got the word *pot* from? Like, when did we say pot around him? I didn’t say it. Why pot of all words, too?”

Technoblade huffs in his sleep like an agreement. Wilbur nods sagely.

“He’s also been saying ‘snow’. Or ‘no’. One of those two. They’re both his favorite words right now. They’re practically the same, are they not?”

He thinks of the one instance a week or so back, Phil having been out on the porch with Tommy while Wilbur made his best effort of making a giant snowman on the lawn.

“Snow.” Tommy had said to him, staring at Wilbur, who was trying to keep a pile of snow from falling and failing miserably at it. His head had turned at hearing his little brother’s voice, and he had smiled so wide at Phil’s gentle laugh.

“Yeah, snow.” Phil agreed. “Your brother’s out in it right now.”

“Snow.” Tommy repeated, waving a hand out, needing to inform everyone that there is snow on the lawn. “Snow!”

Wilbur, in the face of such a new moment, leant down and swiped a handful of said snow, running up to Phil to hold out that same handful to Tommy.

“Look, Tommy. It’s snow.” Wilbur had said softly, palms upraised to offer Tommy the chance to touch it, but Tommy wanted no part of it. He looked down at Wilbur with a little scrunch to his nose, a brand new word announced from his lips.

“No.”

Wilbur blinks blankly up at the response. Phil snickers a bit. “No?”

“No!” Tommy then yelled, kicking his legs at Phil’s side for a second. Then he calms down, and looks out at the lawn. “Snow.”

Wilbur raises his handful back up, a small, generous offering. “This is snow.”

“No.” Tommy replied, like Wilbur was wrong, and that was in fact imposter snow, and Wilbur knows nothing of what he says. “No. *Snow* .”

“ *This* is snow!”

“No!” Tommy shrieks, and Phil laughs as Wilbur shrieks with him.

“What do you mean *no* ?!”

He meant nothing, apparently. Just the word no. Or snow. No matter what Wilbur tried to say about the cold ice sitting on his fingers, Tommy would turn his nose up at it and then say no, then snow, then no, before then pointing out to the snow, like it was a new thing they all must be aware of.

“Dad says he’s just practicing words, but I think he’s messing with me.” Wilbur voices his thoughts out loud to Techno, brow furrowed. “I mean- Well. Okay, he’s a baby. He can’t exactly mess with people, but he’s messing with *me* specifically, Techno. Like, he *knows* he’s a baby. He’s using his babiness to his advantage. I can’t even complain to Phil because then he’s like ‘well, he’s two.’ And what am I supposed to say to that?”

Technoblade offers wisdom in the form of his steady breathing. Wilbur purses his lips together, humming in response.

“You’ve got to wake up.” Wilbur means to go on and ramble some joke about the two of them teaming up against Tommy and his evil babiness, but his words stop there, faltering in his throat. He leans his chin down on the bed, eye level with his brother.

“...Dad misses you.” He says, and while it’s surely true, a fact set in stone with how much their father loves them all, it’s a cover of what he wants to say. I miss you.

The silence in the air floats all around their heads. Wilbur lets his focus stray off downstairs, and he can hear Phil murmuring kind words to their little brother, trying to get him to eat his

lunch. It's so familiar, so fond, and Wilbur loves so much in hearing Tommy screaming back his refusal, stubborn as he seems to always be.

They both seem so loud, compared to Wil's hearing. Techno is so frighteningly quiet in contrast. Wilbur can't bear it, so he makes his choice, no matter how sappy it may look, and climbs up close to his brother, laying his head upon his chest, listening to the deafening sound of his heartbeat right up to his fins.

He breathes in and tries to match with the breaths in his brother's lungs, tries to sync them up like it'll connect them together and give Techno the motivation to do anything other than sleep. For a while, Wil drifts in it, his eyelids growing heavy with the soothing peace of just being here, somewhere safe, somewhere loved.

Then something shifts by his arm, dragging against his sleeve. Wil cracks open an eye in confusion, the drowsiness in his head making it hard to think. He opens his eyes, braces a hand to the lumpy feeling blanket under him and lifts up his heavy head, freezing up to the sight of Technoblade staring directly at him.

They both blearily stare into each other's faces for a second, equally sleepy, slightly confused.

Then the sight of Techno with his eyes open processes in Wilbur's head, and he immediately screams and pushes his hands down to climb backwards, Techno making a pained noise at getting jabbed in the gut.

"HE'S AWAKE! HE'S- DAD! DAAAD, HE'S UP!" Wilbur screams, flinging himself off the bed, foot getting caught on a blanket, his body making a loud thump as he hits the ground. "Ow, fuck!" He yells, then he pops right back up on his knees, eyes bright. "He's up!"

"Uhhg." Techno tries to roll over, away from Wil, his legs drawing up as he curls into himself.

"Nonono- you're up!" Wilbur launches himself back onto the bed to yank him back on his back, hovering over his face like he did before. "Techno, Techno, you've missed so much, I

made snowmen outside, and my hearing is better now, and Skeppy and Bad are still arguing over and over again, but between you and me, I think that's how they flirt, and Tommy can talk more now, and also-

"Daaad." Technoblade groans, slapping his hands into Wil's face to try pushing him away. Wil doesn't really move, seeing as there's so little energy in the action, but he does stop rambling, so there's that. "Dad, help."

"Dad's downstairs." Wilbur says, about to add a 'with Tommy' at the end of the sentence, but he can hear little footsteps running down the hall, and he turns his head to see Tommy zooming into the room, practically stomping the whole way. He goes and goes and then runs into the side of the bed, more or less slamming into it, as he has been doing with everything after getting into a running fit.

"Hello." Wilbur says casually, watching Tommy catch his balance after hitting an obstacle. He cranes his head forward to get a better angle on the little hands grasping onto the edge of the mattress, Tommy now shifting the objective from *going fast* to *going up*.

"Hullo?" Techno greets, not really able to see Tommy from where he's laying down. Tommy's face pops up as he lifts himself up, wings flapping out and feet kicking over with tiny fingers pulling tight on the covers. "Oh, he's learnt to climb. I think that's new. And-probably not good for Skeppy's blood pressure."

"Hi!" Tommy screams as soon as he's conquered the feat of getting on top of the bed. He sits tall and wobbly on his knees, wings stretched out as far as they could go, which isn't a lot, because he's still rather small.

"Hi." Techno replies, unable to keep back a fond grin from his face. Tommy has a laugh bubbling up in his throat, excitement suddenly overcoming him, and he crawls over to him in a focused, dead-set speed, pushing himself to sit by Techno's leg, and then slamming his face into it.

Wilbur bursts out laughing, Techno jerking back at the feeling of tiny teeth trying to eat his knee.

“Oh, god, gross, he’s getting his spit on my pants-!” Techno tries to move, failing miserably with Wil being in his way, his hands still somewhat holding onto Techno. “Get him off me, get him- Dad, Tommy’s teeth are in my *leg* -!”

“Tommy, show Techno the new words you know.” Wilbur goes on to say, entirely unhelpful to Techno’s suffering. “Say no. Or snow. Or say pot. You want to say pot, Tommy?”

Tommy lifts his head and squints with a wag of his scaly tail, then reaches out persistently as Techno starts to pull his leg away. Phil at that moment, finally comes in, Techno holding up his arms to him like he’s his savior.

“Help.” Techno pleads, Phil’s eyes wide at the sight of Wilbur hanging off him and Tommy trying to glue himself to his leg. “They’re killing me. I just woke up, why are they killing me?”

“Oh my gods.” Phil snorts, rushing in to his rescue. “Hey, hey.” He pushes off Wil, the boy rolling off with a heavy huff, Tommy screaming protest at having the leg torn from his grasp. “Stop torturing your brother. It’s been not even a minute, he just got up.”

“Yeah, exactly. We have a bunch of annoying to catch up on.” Wilbur points out, and Technoblade squints a glare at Wil as he hides into the crook of Phil’s neck. Phil sighs, mentally saying goodbye to the possibility of a quiet day, and he stands up straight with Techno held close in his arms.

“Good morning to you.” He says to Techno, the kid shifting his eyes up towards him. “It’s nice to see your eyes again.”

“...thanks?” Techno responds, squinting tiredly. “Your eyes are nice, too.” Techno says, halfway in a yawn. Phil lets him get it out, then goes to put Techno on his feet as he begins to stretch out, his limbs wanting the relief of movement. Technoblade braces himself for the great ordeal of standing, and then falls straight to the ground, Phil making a surprised noise and snatching the back of his shirt to pull him back up.

“You good?” Phil asks, Techno leaning heavily back on him as he’s held on his legs. He makes a slow, shocked blink, like he has no clue why his legs did not do their job. “Okay, let’s give you a minute. No walking yet.”

“I’m up.” Techno protests, but it’s a half-hearted thing, and he makes no further argument with Phil sweeping him back up into his arms. He brushes his hand over Techno’s forehead, pushing hair back out of his face. “What *day* is it?”

“It’s the end of winter.” Wilbur replies brightly. “Spring started, I told you, there’s birds, and the flowers aren’t up yet but-”

“Uhhgg.” Technoblade cuts him off, the words too much, too fast. Wilbur scrunches his nose with a frown. “Nevermind.”

Phil laughs, leaning back down to the bed to let Techno sit by the pillows and his brothers. “You’re alright. I’m going to go get you a drink, okay?”

“Mkay.” Techno mutters, rubbing a hand at his face. He watches Phil go out the door, then straightens up in sudden realization. “Wait. No.” He’s pushed almost sideways at Wilbur grabbing him again, leaning all his weight on him, Tommy clawing at the fabric of his pants around his knee once more, that being his main objective right now, for some reason. “No, don’t leave me with them-! Dad!” He yells, pushing Wil in the face, Wilbur screaming in response, Tommy screaming to join in.

Phil laughs the whole way down the stairs, glad to have the chaos back.

---

Wilbur tells Techno about what he heard in the wind, later on, when they have the chance to speak alone outside, Phil and the others out of hearing range.

How could he not? He's got to catch him up on everything, and the whisper in the wind, while a bit of an odd memory, is something Wil feels Techno should be told about. It's something he should know.

Or maybe, he just hopes Techno will know more about it than him.

Technoblade reacts with little reaction to being told about that night, his expression almost disbelieving about the whole thing, even when Wil insists it wasn't a dream.

"Maybe you can hear trees." He suggests to Wil, Wilbur's face going sour at such words. "Maybe you were hearing the voices of the trees?"

"I'm not joking about this!"

"Neither am I." Techno replies. "Listening to actual nature talking to you- that's pretty cool, isn't it?"

Wilbur shrugs mildly against the idea. "I guess. But I don't think it was the trees. I mean- there was this gravestone..."

"A what." Technoblade repeats. He blinks at Wilbur with a sudden concern, as if that was a detail that maybe should've been mentioned first.

"I followed the voice outside, into the woods-"

"That's a terrible idea, don't ever do that again-"

"I followed the voice, and it led to this- gravestone. It was just there, all alone." Wilbur explains, thinking back to the sight of it, unease crawling up his back. He tries to shake it off, looking to Techno. "Maybe I was just scaring myself. Imagining it." He tries to smile, hoping

for Techno to make some sort of joke, but his twin just looks considerate, instead. Thought and serious.

“You’re hearing ghosts.” He blatantly says to Wil’s face, and Wilbur stares at Techno like he’s lost his mind.

“What.” He says. Then he sits up straighter. “ *What* ?!”

“It’s a voice out of nowhere, it led you to a grave- that’s a ghost, you heard the dead-”

“No, I didn’t!” Wilbur denies. “I didn’t hear anything!”

“If heard whispering-”

“No!” Wilbur shakes his head. “No, I did not, and- I will not, ever again.”

“You haven’t tried to hear it again?”

“No.” Wilbur replies, and at his brother’s stare, he points a stern finger. “And I am not going to try it again, we are going to forget all about this!”

The next night, they sneak out from the room to try and see if Wil could hear the whisper again. It’s only to be expected. Techno is skeptical, but curious, and Wilbur feels a little braver with his brother with him, ready to take on any threats that could come from singing songs in the wind.

They stand out on the porch with the silence of the night around them, their feet bare and Techno’s skin littered with goosebumps from a lingering chill of winter. Wilbur watches the forest like he’s expecting something to come out, and Techno watches Wilbur like he’s waiting for him to give a signal.

“Can you hear her?” Wilbur asks out loud, after some time, the two of them standing in the quiet, nothing but the moon as their company.

“Do you?” Techno asks, suddenly a little unsettled for if he’s missing something.

“No. Not now.” Wilbur shakes his head, looking both relieved and disappointed. He turns to Techno with a focused nod. “But she was real. I swear she was.”

Techno hums, not daring to argue against his brother. If he truly believes it, then he will too. “Do you remember where the grave was?” He asks, looking out to the forest trees.

“I haven’t gone to it since I first found it.” Wilbur answers. “We’d probably just get lost. And then Dad will ask questions...”

“I feel like we should probably tell him about this.” Techno points out, glancing behind them at the door. “It feels like something that we should tell him.”

“Yeah.” Wilbur agrees, looking down onto the rustling grass. “But I don’t know. It’s just- It’s weird. I know he’ll believe me, he’s not going to be mad or say I’m lying, but- It’s just weird. I can’t- I dunno how to tell him.” He huffs, turning away, as if wanting to head inside. “It’s not like I’ve heard her since.”

“If you hear her again, then we could tell Phil.” Techno offers.

“*If* I hear her again.” Wilbur says, and he makes them head inside then, giving up on this ordeal, eager to put it behind them.

They go back to bed.

Techno wakes up, later on, amongst the blankets and the warmth of his family. The voices in his head are quiet. Eerily quiet.

He sits up and puts a hand to his head, put off by the silence. Usually, at every moment, there's at least some sort of murmuring, some sort of echo of noise. He's gotten good at tuning it out, ignoring the most of it, but this-

Where have they gone?

Panic begins to crawl up into his throat, an urge to shake Phil awake forming in his head, but just as he's about to do so, there comes a voice, a woman's voice speaking very, very gently.

*I'm sorry. I don't mean to scare you.*

And then chat comes rising back, slowly reviving into a mixed sound of confusion and curiosity. They seem- unaware of what's happened. All they're curious about is why Techno is up right now, and why he's acting so spooked.

Techno ignores them. Ignores what he's just heard. Not his problem. Wilbur had the right tactic, he will follow it. He isn't trying to keep secrets from Phil, he doesn't mean to. Honestly, there's no point in keeping this to himself. But it's like Wilbur said. It's just weird. Or- off.

Technoblade doesn't say anything about it in the morning.

He feels like if he speaks her into existence, something will happen.

---

It's an uneventful evening when Phil is making dinner, Bad and Skeppy sitting at the table in the kitchen with him, the three of them sharing light conversation with the kids spending their

time up in the room, probably fighting with the pillows or witnessing Tommy get into a running sprint up and down the hall.

Things suddenly turn eventful with the unexpected sound of something like a crack of wood upstairs and a shriek of surprise. Techno's voice immediately starts calling him in a whining panic and Phil automatically puts the stove at a low heat, letting Bad take over.

"I'm coming!" Phil says, leaving the kitchen and going up the stairs, a rush in his steps, but not a whole sprint. The yell wasn't that panicked, so he doesn't think anyone is hurt.

"What the fuck, Techno." Wilbur swears from within the hallway, Phil turning the corner of the stairs and seeing him stare at the culprit of the eventfulness, which is-

A broken doorknob.

...what?

"I didn't- I-" Technoblade stammers over his words, holding the said broken doorknob in his hand. He looks at it like it spontaneously just appeared in his palm, and Phil's almost inclined to believe that's what happened, with how genuinely baffled he looks.

"Now how did you do that?" Phil asks as he walks up, hands resting on his hips with the twins looking up at him, Tommy looking at the floor, his arm wrapped around Wil's lower leg from where he stands by the doorway of their bedroom.

"I don't know?" Technoblade says, turning the doorknob over, frowning hard. "It just-snapped off."

"It did not just snap off!" Wil argues, throwing his hands out. Tommy copies the motion, raising his free arm up like conducting an orchestra.

“I was just grabbing it like normal! It broke!” Technoblade insists.

“You tore it out of the fucking door-”

“It *snapped* .” Technoblade stresses, looking worryingly at Phil as if to see if he believes him.

“Let me see it.” Phil says, holding his hand out and coming closer to take the doorknob in his hand. He holds it up to his face to find- nothing terribly impressive. It’s just broken, torn off its place upon the door. He’s not sure what he was expecting to see. “Well. It’s broken.”

“Sorry.” Techno apologizes sheepishly, shoulders raising up to his ears. He puts his hands together, picking at his fingers. “I wasn’t trying to break it.”

“I believe you.” Phil assures, not terribly concerned. More curious, over anything. “What did you do, exactly?”

“I grabbed it. And pulled.” Technoblade says, making the gesture mid-air. He walks over to one of their empty rooms, ready to demonstrate. “I was just-” He starts to say, and then that doorknob snaps off its place, Techno blinking with wide eyes.

Both Phil and Wilbur stare as he turns around, another doorknob killed within his palm. Tommy laughs out of nowhere, seeming to find it all quite funny.

“Stay away from the doors!” Wilbur yells, moving forward and grabbing onto Techno with both arms, as if to hold him back from causing havoc on the rest of their doorknobs. “You’re gonna break all of them!”

“Dad, am I cursed?” Techno asks, ignoring the action of being jostled around by his twin.

“He’s cursed with breaking doorknobs.” Wilbur says to Phil. Techno looks honestly upset over that, his expression crumbling into distress. Phil resists the urge to laugh, the situation a little too ridiculous to take seriously.

“No- he’s not- Wilbur, don’t tell your brother he’s cursed.”

Wilbur gives a suspicious side-eye look towards his brother, not entirely convinced that he isn’t cursed to break doorknobs. Technoblade frowns openly, groaning as he pushes Wil off him. “How am I going to open doors now!?” He yells, putting his hands to his head for this sudden dilemma.

“I can open them for you.” Wilbur kindly offers, Techno’s worry softening into something touched. “For a fee.” Techno’s face settles into a glare.

“I don’t think this is a doorknob centric issue.” Phil points out, Tommy walking past all of them to head over to the stairs and begin his trek of scooting down them one by one, as babies tend to do. Phil considers the doorknob piece in his hand, looking at the way the screws are bent and broken. “Hmm. Techno, come with me.”

They go to head on outside, Wilbur trying to take Tommy along, and failing, for Tommy is insistent to slowly go down the steps at his own pace. Skeppy assures he’ll keep an eye on him (from a distance) to make sure he doesn’t spontaneously toss himself down the steps.

Phil leads them around the house to where their wood pile is stored, the axe still sitting stuck upon a trunk. Phil picks a decently large piece for what he has in plan, and hands it over to Techno, who gives an impressively baffled look at being given a random big log.

“Try and break that in half.” Phil tells him, Wilbur’s eyebrows raising up at the request.

“Why?” Technoblade asks, staring down at the log with a new dread.

“You can’t do it?” Phil asks in return.

“No, I can-” Techno doesn’t look so convinced that he can, but goes to try anyway, digging his fingers into the bark and bracing himself as if to exert all his energy.

The wood proceeds to practically crumble in his hands, splintering apart with the pieces scattering to the floor. Wilbur screams in surprise at it practically exploding, his arms shielding himself, his eye poking over his elbow when a beat of silence has passed.

“Oh.” Techno says, not having expected for it to be that easy.

“I wanna try!” Wilbur says, marveling at the remains of wood at their feet. He goes to the pile of logs and picks up a bigger one than what Phil had chosen. Phil waits for him to possibly get the same result, but no such thing happens. He just struggles for a solid minute, fins flaring at the sides of his face with the exertion of it.

Eventually, he’s fed up with it, and he tosses it to Techno for him to make his effort. Technoblade catches it with an unsure look, but goes to try anyhow.

It snaps cleanly in half.

“Wha-” Wilbur sputters, eyes following the wood as Techno lets it drop onto the ground. “How did you-?”

“Dad, I think the wood’s defective.” Techno tells Phil, seeming a bit concerned, staring at his hands.

“I don’t think it’s the wood, Techno. Or the doorknobs.” Phil replies, unsure what to do with the mix of joy and fatherly sadness flowing through his heart.

It’s them growing up.

---

They add 'unexplainable strength' onto the list of powers for that week, placing the blame of it onto the magic once foretold in those damned prophecies.

Bad seems genuinely fascinated by it, himself having his own muscle but mostly due to his size. Techno is barely up to his hip in terms of height, scrawny and as unassuming-looking as a kid's proportions will be, but with all wood they've tested outside, breaking them apart and then breaking an axe by mistake, it seems Techno matches his strength, outdoes it, even.

Skeppy finds it somewhat unusual for someone so young to be suddenly given such power, but he's about as unsurprised as any other adult in the house, all three of them fully aware of the fact that they are magic born beings. Results were bound to come out of that, even if this seems so- early.

Phil doesn't like being reminded that Techno is getting older. Their next birthday approaches not too far on the horizon. Was it not just yesterday they picked out the day? He's both devastated at the idea of all of them getting taller and growing up, but also endlessly proud of the fact that they will become strong. They will be safe.

They are, right now, however, still young. And as such, this power being given into an eleven year old's hands is hard to adjust to, especially since Techno has no idea how to control it.

It starts off with the small things. He bends a spoon at breakfast. Then two. Then he cracks a cup by mistake at the same meal, then he cracks the bowl he's eating out of, having gripped it too hard.

He breaks another doorknob (the front door's) upon trying to go outside. He tears his own coat in trying to put it on, his arm getting caught in the sleeve. It barely reaches the afternoon until he's gotten overwhelmed with it, throwing himself into bed as if to end the day early, burying himself under the pillows with an endless despair. Wilbur tells Phil he's gone into a sulking mood, with a specific tone that says 'please fix it or else, I too, will start sulking'.

Phil sighs when he comes by the doorway of their room, seeing Techno's curled up figure on the bed, the curtains drawn shut for a dramatic effect of wallowing in darkness.

"I break everything I touch." Technoblade despairs, feeling Phil's weight sit down on the bed.

"No, you don't." Phil says, matter of fact, hand resting over Techno's shoulder, his other hand trying to gingerly pull the pillow off from over his head.

"Yes I do! I'm gonna break half of our kitchen at this point. I'm gonna break something important." Techno insists, pulling the pillow tighter onto his head. His voice is muffled, but there's an honest worry creeping in his voice that makes Phil want to squeeze him close. "I'm gonna *hurt* someone."

"What will you do if you do?" Phil asks, and Techno sits still for a moment, not really responding. Phil leans forward, rephrasing the question. "If you accidentally hurt one of us, what will you do?"

"Bury myself in a hole." Technoblade instantly replies.

Phil snorts without meaning to. He pats on Techno's shoulder. "Okay, not the response I was thinking." He takes a breath, trying to pull at the pillow again, Techno allowing him this time, his face still partially hidden under a mess of hair. "What I *mean*, is that if you hurt us, you're going to try and be careful after, right?"

"Well, yeah." Techno scoffs, turning his head at Phil it's unthinkable to do anything else.

"You're going to try and learn to be better."

Technoblade looks away, lips pursing together. "...Yeah." He repeats, a little more quietly.

“You shouldn’t be scared of breaking everything, nor of hurting us everytime you touch us. You can be careful. You can be wary about this. But if you break something, or hurt us, we’ll know it’s not on purpose. And I know you’ll try very hard to not do it again.”

He places his hands onto the sides of Techno’s face, making him look up instead of slumping back into the bed.

“You will get used to this. It’s new, and it’s hard, and I know you’re scared, but you’re going to figure it out.” Phil promises, Techno’s eyes looking up with all the trust of a child to their parent. “I mean, look at Wil. He had problems with his hearing, I’m sure he told you how much it hurt him in the first few days. But he’s got it now. You’re going to get the hang of it.”

Techno’s jaw shifts as if he’s biting the side of his cheek in thought, his hands reaching up to very carefully, very gently, pull Phil’s hands away. He sits up from the bed to put himself against Phil’s chest, Phil automatically pulling him into a hug.

“I still don’t wanna touch anything.” Technoblade mutters, sounding at least a little less worried now, more just resigned to his fate.

Phil huffs. “You know what? Why don’t we put your strength to something useful? So you can figure out how to manage it?”

Techno raises his head up in a curious confusion. “With what?”

They head to the garden later that day. Techno is given free reign to go hacking at old tree roots, pulling them to the side, and Phil does it alongside him, although at a far slower pace, with a lot less results. By the time he stands still for a break, struggling with pulling a tree trunk out from the dirt, Techno’s cleared half the garden space, Wilbur and Tommy joyfully playing in the free dirt hills piled all around.

Techno goes to Phil’s side at seeing him stop, and he sees the tilted trunk in the ground, Phil’s efforts at cutting it out and pulling it free having proved a failure.

“Can I help?” Techno offers, looking up at Phil with something eager, likely excited to keep pressing the limits of what he can do. He had seemed rather content earlier, dragging the entirety of a cut-down tree across the yard with little struggle. Phil supposes his ego is high, in knowing that he’s greatly helping Phil with the garden rather than breaking anything with this.

Phil waves his hands out for Techno to tackle the trunk, and Techno leans down with a grin, grabbing tightly onto the roots and tearing the whole thing up with dirt flying out. He then goes to pull it over to their pile of torn roots and old fencing, the majority of it being Techno’s efforts.

Wilbur watches him walk by with a sudden interest, like an idea has popped into his head. He pays no mind to Tommy rubbing dirt into his shoes, really trying to pack it into the crevices.

“That’s not heavy for you?” He asks his brother, Techno throwing the dead remains of the tree with a very casual ease.

“...no.”

Wilbur beams, leaning down and picking up Tommy from the ground. Tommy seems perturbed by the sudden shift, but as long as there is dirt in his grubby hand, he seems happy. Techno takes a step back as Wil makes his way over to him with their youngest, holding him out like he’s a prized item, practically forcing Techno to hold him.

“Uh...” Technoblade takes the baby, Tommy resting on his left arm, looking at him with wide eyes, then showing the dirt that he has in his hand. “Yes, that’s very nice.” Techno tells him, giving a clear look at Wil for him to take the very dear and very fragile baby brother back.

Wil does no such thing. He steps even close to Techno, then practically jumps onto him, Technoblade automatically trying to catch him, even with knowing it won’t work, knowing they’re all going to end up falling onto the-

Techno stumbles, standing in an odd balance, but not on the floor. He straightens himself a little, Wilbur clinging tightly around his neck, eyes wide at his plan actually working. He

looks down at his dangling legs, as if in wonder that Techno was actually able to catch him. Techno just shifts his grip on both Wil and Tommy, somewhat raising Wil higher into the air.

“Why are you this light?” Techno asks, completely forgetting the fact that it is not Wil who’s become less heavy, it’s him who’s become stronger.

“I’m a perfectly normal weight, thank you very much. You’re the one who got the strong thing.” Wil reminds, leaning an elbow onto Techno’s shoulder, Tommy deciding that now is the best time to fling his handful of dirt into the air, like a celebratory confetti. “Dad, you next!” Wilbur yells, pointing towards Phil, who stands only a few steps away, himself having rushed over with the anticipation of all his kids collapsing into the ground in a heap of limbs.

“I think Techno’s got his arms full.” Phil says, lowering his arms from where they were raised out, taking a small sigh of relief.

“Suit yourself.” Wil shrugs. “Onwards!” He declares, pointing a finger straight out, Tommy mimicking the word.

“On!”

Technoblade blinks slowly at the processing of the moment, a gentle type of excitement beginning to form on his face, his eyes gleaming with a sudden joy and pride as he tests their weight again, Wilbur screaming as he gets lifted up onto Techno’s shoulder.

“You’re going to drop me!” Wilbur warns, but Techno doesn’t heed the words, and he breaks out into a full on run, Tommy shrieking with delight as they speed across the emptied garden. Phil watches them go, knowing they’re going to fall, and he laughs and runs over the moment they do, all three falling right into the freshly loosened dirt.

## Chapter End Notes

hijinks. Shenanigans, if you will.

ahhh I love this fic. It's kinda hard to hit the balance between slice of life and "oh my God the plot is building" but like. Eh. There's an effort there! We are all mostly here for the family feels tho ngl. The random foreboding magic ghost scenes are just-background noise. Ignore that. Everyone look, Techno can carry his family around now YAYYY

On a more honest note, it has been. A hot minute. Since I've touched this fic. Truth is, I struggle with the Horrors, and my head likes to do a thing with my stories sometimes and convince me that they suck. This fic is the terrible victim of my mean little head. I've never given up on it! It's just very hard to try sometimes bc for some reason, I actually genuinely believed that this story was somehow horrible and badly written and it'd be dumb to return to it. But then I took the time to actually like. Reread it. And wow, past me really wrote a whole story that's just filled to the brim with love, huh. It's all just love. what a thrill.

anyhow, besides that rambling, I suggest to follow my Tumblr, it is where I am now mostly active, if you want to make sure I'm alive and kicking. (I am usually kicking. against the Demons.) If you don't wanna do that, then just be aware that I'm Kinda on a update schedule now, update days being the 1st of the month! (Or a little earlier, like today, bc I get too excited) I promise nothing, but monthly mass updates are fun to me now, so i'll probably stick to that for a while.

anyway, thank you so much for reading and for waiting. I will see you next month. Maybe. Depends on if I put this fic on the update list lol. Byeee!

## End Notes

Thanks for reading! I am up at a time where I should be asleep! Thanks so much if you've left a kudos, I can and will cry out of gratefulness. I would give you money, but I'm broke!

Thanks anyway, and also geez I need to stop making a bunch of SBI worlds, I'm updating like four different fics at a time haha

(If you got fanart or something, you can @ me with the username "sircantus" on either insta, twitter, or tumblr. I would love to see it! :D )

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